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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this guide is to provide educators with a unified, consistent approach to the teaching of expository writing skills. The guide emphasizes the sequential development of writing skills from kindergarten through grade 12 and provides objectives for each grade level. Each objective is accompanied by an explanation that further defines various aspects of word, sentence, and paragraph development at specific levels. When appropriate, the guide also offers activities related to the objectives. (FL)

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COMPOSITION: K-12

Sentence

Paragraph

Multi-Paragraph

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1978

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Words 1-2

Sentences 1-3

Paragraphs 1-4

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Written Composition Sequence, Grades 1-3 2-1

Introduction 2-2

Words 2-2

Sentences 2-3

Paragraphs 2-4

Grade 3

Written Composition Sequence, Grades 2-4 3-1

Introduction 3-2

Words 3-2

Sentences 3-3

Paragraphs 3-4

Grade 4

Written Composition Sequence, Grades 3-5 4-1

Introduction 4-2

Words 4-3

Sentences 4-4

Paragraphs 4-5

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Written Composition Sequence, Grades 4-6 5-1

Introduction 5-2

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Words 12-2

Sentences 12-3

Paragraphs 12-4

PREFACE

The purpose of Chelmsford's curriculum guide, Composition: K-12, is to provide a unified, consistent approach to the teaching of expository skills in writing. In general, expository writing refers to compositions which persuade or argue, agree or disagree, or give reasons or definitions. The writer of exposition, rather than being primarily concerned with trying to amuse or to entertain, uses language to accomplish a practical purpose. Most of the writing done in school--tests, reports, essays--is expository, and approximately 95 percent of all writing after high school or in college is of this kind. This partially explains the commitment of the language arts program to teaching expository skills throughout the grades.

It cannot be emphasized enough, however, that the stress on expository skills in this guide is in no way a limitation of students' opportunities to respond in a creative manner. Writing is more than a practical skill; it is an instrument which enables students to objectify their personal feelings. Accordingly, students in all grades, and especially at the primary level, are encouraged to use forms like stories and poems to express their attitudes and insights. The use of fictional or even fanciful structures helps students to discover what they want to say and to learn that writing can be an enjoyable experience. Moreover, regardless of the form students select for their writing, the concerns for such areas as invention, voice, tone, and consistency of style are basically the same.

The main emphasis of this guide is on the sequential development of writing skills from K-12, and although grade level designations are provided for each of the objectives, the teacher decides which of the objectives apply to individual students or to an entire class. This means that students who have demonstrated strength in a given area will be encouraged to progress as rapidly as possible within the framework of the recommended sequence of skills. An advanced ninth grade student or class might conceivably be writing précis or essays of deductive reasoning, forms of writing usually taught in the twelfth grade. By the same token, students who need to learn skills listed at earlier levels will follow the techniques suggested at that level using, however, examples and illustrations drawn from materials at their interest level.

Needless to say, then, the objectives stated for a particular year are not the only objectives taught for that year. It would, in fact, be almost impossible to confine the teaching of writing to only one or two word, sentence, or paragraph objectives for an entire year. For example, even though paragraphs of comparison and contrast are not stressed until the ninth grade, it is understood that students from the third grade on will be writing comparisons of one type or another in various areas of writing. Besides, paragraphs and essays are rarely pure exemplifications of a particular organizational pattern. In the practice of writing, sharp distinctions tend to break down depending on purposes to be achieved and various devices used to achieve these purposes. A narrative incident could appropriately be used to illustrate the validity of a thesis statement in any essay developed by comparison. The

overlapping organizational modes of writing must be stressed throughout the program.

Each of the grade level objectives is accompanied by an explanation which further defines various aspects of word, sentence, and paragraph development at certain levels. When appropriate, the explanation is followed by an activity related to the objective. The broad framework for this writing program will enable teachers to utilize more effectively materials that currently exist and to generate additional ideas, lesson plans, and approaches for teaching writing. Additional work in these areas may become the focus of a future language arts workshop.

The objectives in this guide do not deal specifically with mechanical skills, that is, grammar, punctuation, or capitalization. These skills have been adequately articulated in The Language Arts Competencies Guide: K-6 developed in 1977. The Skills Development Chart for this guide will be extended during the coming year to include the junior and senior high schools. It is understood that mechanical skills are, indeed, an important adjunct to the total writing process and will continue to be given serious consideration at all grade levels in the teaching of writing.

As part of the process of implementing this writing program, workshops and meetings at both the elementary and secondary levels will be held during the 1978-1979 school year to discuss the criteria for assessing writing. To facilitate the effectiveness of these meetings and to move in the directions suggested by the state guidelines for competency testing, we are asking that all teachers in grades 3-12 observe the following procedures:

1. Keep a writing folder for each student which will be passed on to the next year's teacher.
2. Include in the writing folder--
   a. One paper each marking term, including drafts and final copies, illustrating stated paragraph objectives.
   b. A profile sheet for each student (separate experimental sheets are provided for grades 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12).

This guide is available not only to teachers and administrators, but also, upon request, to students and parents. Each page is in language that is understandable to the layman, as many parents are interested in knowing the goals of our programs. Some of them are even willing to spend a considerable amount of time in assisting their children at home to develop their writing. Teachers, administrators, students, and parents alike may use this guide to understand the sequential development of expository writing as taught in the Chelmsford School System.

A. James Temmallo
Coordinator of Language Arts (K-12)
September 1, 1978

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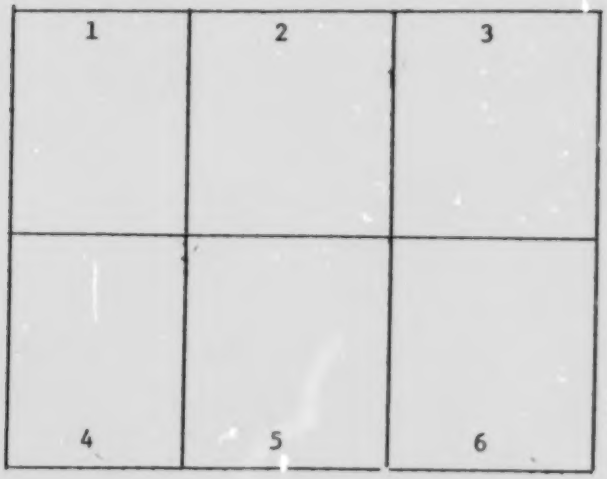
Joyce Rawlinson - Harrington School
Suzanne Wytrwal - North School
A. James Temmallo - Chairperson

Summer, 1978

Directions for assembling Flow Chart for Compositional Writing



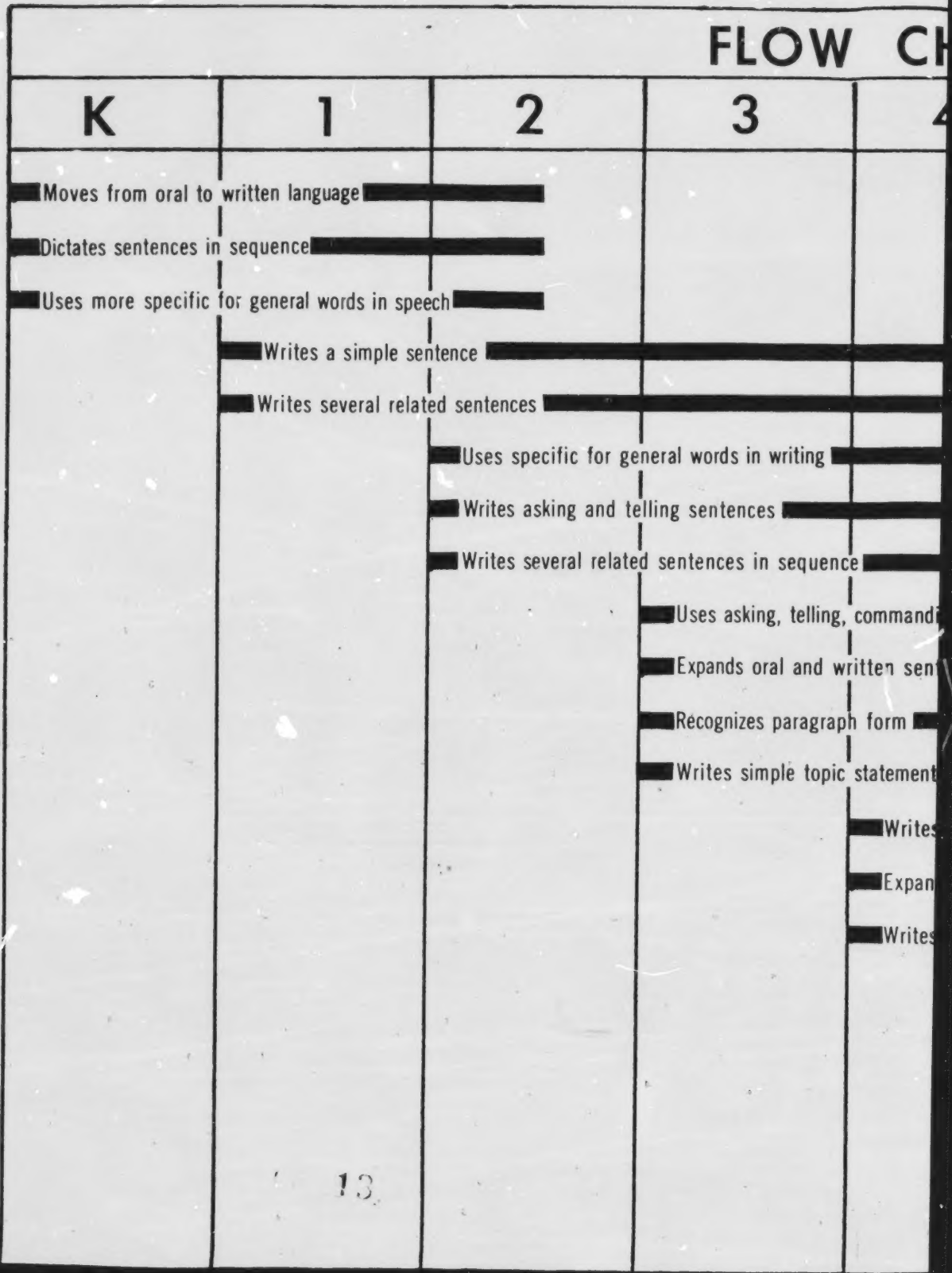

FLOW CH
K
1
2
3
4
Moves from oral to written language
Dictates sentences in sequence
Uses more specific for general words in speech
Writes a simple sentence
Writes several related sentences
Uses specific for general words in writing
Writes asking and telling sentences
Writes several related sentences in sequence
Uses asking, telling, commandi
Expands oral and written sen
Recognizes paragraph form
Writes simple topic statement
Writes
Expan
Writes

CHART FOR COMPOSITIONAL WRI

4	5	6	7	8

commanding, and exclamatory sentences in writing

tten sentences with adjectives

form

statements followed by supporting sentences

Writes simple comparisons

Expands written sentences with word and phrase modifiers (adverb as well as adjective)

Writes factual topic statements supported with details that answer the question "What?"

Uses similes in writing

Varies sentences in writing by changing position of word or phrase modifier

Develops paragraphs which answer the question "Why?" or "How?" after the key wor

Writes sentences reduced through the use of modifiers and conn

Develops intensified and refined topic statements into paragrap

Places topic statement properly within the paragraph

WRITING

8	9	10	11	12

key word in the topic statement

and connectives

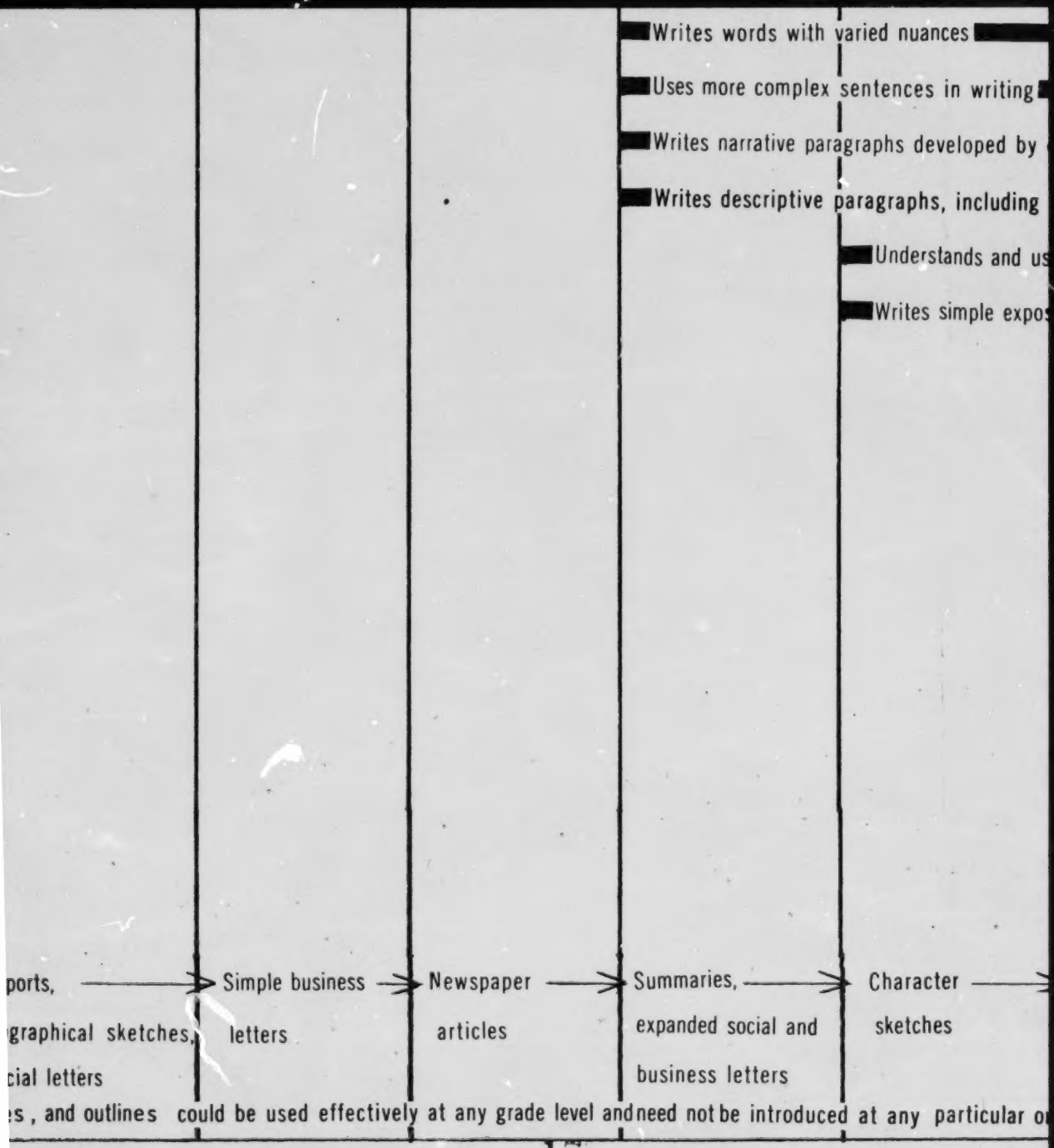
paragraphs

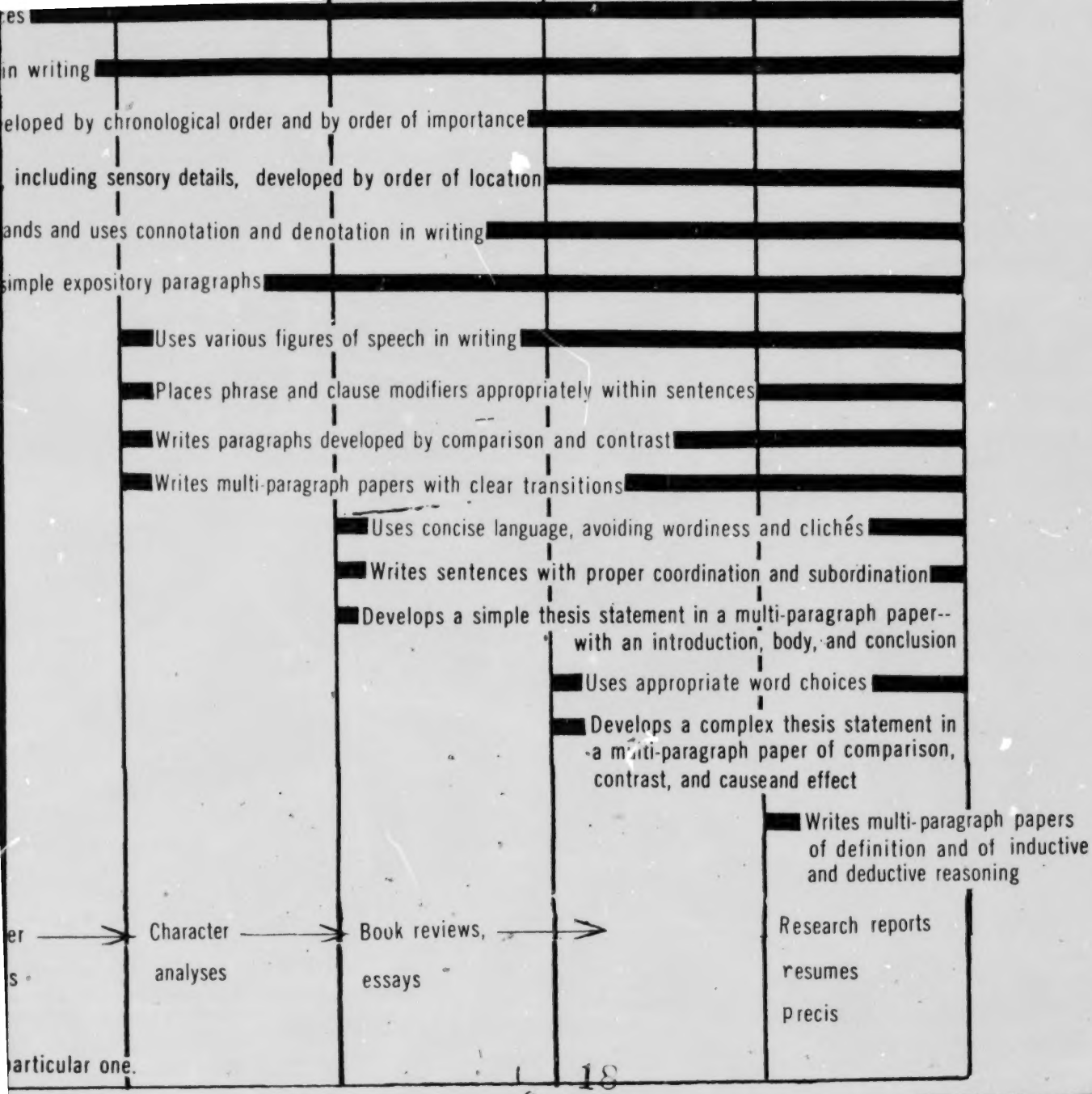
0 15

Possible applications, forms for expressing compositional skills:

Group stories → Individual stories → Reports, biographi social let

NOTE: Other forms, such as diaries, journals, autobiographies, interior monologues, dialogues, an


Writes words with varied nuances
Uses more complex sentences in writing
Writes narrative paragraphs developed by
Writes descriptive paragraphs, including
Understands and us
Writes simple expos
ports,
graphical sketches,
cial letters
Simple business letters
Newspaper articles
Summaries, expanded social and business letters
Character sketches
es, and outlines could be used effectively at any grade level and need not be introduced at any particular o


es
in writing
eloped by chronological order and by order of importance
including sensory details, developed by order of location
ands and uses connotation and denotation in writing
simple expository paragraphs
Uses various figures of speech in writing
Places phrase and clause modifiers appropriately within sentences
Writes paragraphs developed by comparison and contrast
Writes multi-paragraph papers with clear transitions
Uses concise language, avoiding wordiness and clichés
Writes sentences with proper coordination and subordination
Develops a simple thesis statement in a multi-paragraph paper--with an introduction, body, and conclusion
Uses appropriate word choices
Develops a complex thesis statement in a multi-paragraph paper of comparison, contrast, and cause and effect
Writes multi-paragraph papers of definition and of inductive and deductive reasoning
er
s
Character analyses
Book reviews, essays
Research reports
resumes
precis
particular one.

COMPOSITION RECORD CHART - GRADES 3-5

Name_____ Date_____

Grade_____ Teacher_____

Skill	November			May		
Word Choice	1	2	3	1	2	3
Sentence Development	1	2	3	1	2	3
Topic Sentence Development	1	2	3	1	2	3
Grammar	1	2	3	1	2	3
Punctuation	1	2	3	1	2	3
Capitalization	1	2	3	1	2	3
Spelling	1	2	3	1	2	3

Code: 1 - Strong 2 - Satisfactory 3 - Needs Improvement

Comments:_____

COMPOSITION RECORD CHART - GRADES 6-8

Name_____ Date_____

Grade_____ Teacher_____

	October			May		
	Yes	No		Yes	No	
Paragraph:						
Topic sentence						
Relevant details						
Logical order						
Concluding device						
Sentences:						
Complete						
Varied						
Appropriate Word Choice						
Mechanics:						
Grammar	1	2	3	1	2	3
Spelling	1	2	3	1	2	3
Punctuation	1	2	3	1	2	3
Capitalization	1	2	3	1	2	3
Format	1	2	3	1	2	3

Code: 1 - Strong 2 - Satisfactory 3 - Needs Improvement

Comments:_____

COMPOSITION RECORD CHART - GRADES 9 - 12

Name_____ Date_____

Grade_____ Teacher_____

Course_____

	October			May		
Word Choice	1	2	3	1	2	3
Sentence Structure	1	2	3	1	2	3
Paragraph Development	1	2	3	1	2	3
Transition to multi-paragraphs	1	2	3	1	2	3
Essay Development:						
Thesis statement	1	2	3	1	2	3
Introduction	1	2	3	1	2	3
Body	1	2	3	1	2	3
Conclusion	1	2	3	1	2	3
Transitions	1	2	3	1	2	3
Mechanics:						
Grammar	1	2	3	1	2	3
Punctuation	1	2	3	1	2	3
Capitalization	1	2	3	1	2	3
Spelling	1	2	3	1	2	3
Format	1	2	3	1	2	3

Comments:_____

Code:

1 - Strong

2 - Satisfactory

3 - Needs Improvement

COMPOSITION RECORD CHART

Name_____ Date_____

Grade_____ Teacher_____

Evaluation in October/November

STRENGTHS_____

_____

_____

_____

WEAKNESSES_____

_____

_____

_____

* * * * * * * * * * *

Evaluation in May/June

STRENGTHS_____

_____

_____

_____

WEAKNESSES_____

_____

_____

_____

WRITTEN COMPOSITION SEQUENCE

	KINDERGARTEN	GRADE 1	GRADE 2
WORDS	The student develops a listening and speaking vocabulary. The student can substitute orally specific for general words.	The student continues to develop a listening and speaking vocabulary. The student continues orally to substitute specific for general words.	The student continues to develop a listening and speaking vocabulary. The student can substitute specific for general words.
SENTENCES	The student can express himself/herself in complete oral sentences. The student recognizes that his/her oral language can be written.	The student can write a simple sentence, avoiding fragments.	The student can expand in writing simple sentences, avoiding fragments. The student can recognize and write asking and telling sentences.
PARAGRAPHS	The student can dictate several related sentences in sequence.	The student continues to develop the ability to verbalize and begins to write several related sentences.	The student can write several related sentences in sequence.

COMPOSITION: KINDERGARTEN

INTRODUCTION

Kindergarten students begin school with widely varied language backgrounds. Some children are very verbal with highly sophisticated vocabularies; others are nearly silent and must be carefully guided and encouraged to express themselves. Since they experience tremendous change in this first year of school, it is difficult to generalize about year-long objectives for an average child. Many children will reach and surpass anticipated goals early in the fall, while others will struggle to communicate even in June. Kindergarten students experience a wide variety of activities. Through these activities they will develop a broader vocabulary and understanding of the world around them.

WORDS

OBJECTIVES:

The student is developing an increased listening and speaking vocabulary.

The student can orally substitute specific for general words.

EXPLANATION:

All through the year listening and speaking are major ingredients of the day. Listening to stories, poems, music, and games (directions) strengthens listening skills and develops vocabulary. Through interaction with other children and continual teacher encouragement, the students learn to listen and express themselves orally.

ACTIVITY:

Have children close their eyes. Say a series of words (chair, rug, door, window). Children must open their eyes and in order go touch articles named. As they become more proficient, they may be given a longer list.

A kindergarten child will also develop a more specific vocabulary through activities involving all the senses. Group discussions about experiences in and out of the classroom help build specific concepts and understandings relating to new words.

ACTIVITIES:

Give the students bags containing objects to feel that are soft, rough, smooth, sharp, etc. Have the students feel these objects. After discussing "How they feel," make these objects into a collage and label them with the appropriate describing words.

Give students jars containing spices, herbs, or familiar foods to smell and/or taste. Class discussion sharing descriptive words and specific names enlarges and refines vocabulary.

SENTENCES

OBJECTIVES:

The student can express himself/herself in complete oral sentences.

The student recognizes that his/her oral language can be written.

EXPLANATION:

"Show and tell" or sharing time is an excellent opportunity for children to speak about familiar objects or personal experiences. The block corner and playhouse areas also give many children practice speaking. The teacher guides the child with questions that require answers in complete sentences, avoiding fragments.

ACTIVITY:

Show a filmstrip (Little Red Hen, Gingerbread Boy, or Three Bears are excellent). Read the story aloud as you see the pictures. Show the filmstrip again, without the words. (These three films actually delete the text from second series of pictures.) Ask

children to retell the story as closely to the original text as possible. This will be difficult for some, but with practice, a marked improvement will be seen. To reinforce listening and speaking vocabulary, use the flannel board or puppets to tell and retell original or classic stories.

To help children transfer their oral language into the written word, many labeling and verbalizing activities are used. Books are made by the children dictating to the teacher. These books progress from simple labeling of colors and shapes to complete sentences describing illustrations made by the child.

ACTIVITIES:

Discuss pets, their food, appearance, and tricks. Make pet books by having the child draw or trace the shape of a pet. Cut out pages to the shape. Have child illustrate each page with something about his/her pet Use these pictures to motivate storytelling. As the child describes the pictures, the teacher writes the sentence.

Make a farm book. Cut out a large red barn. Stencils for animal shapes may be used if children don't want to draw their own. Pages are cut in the barn shape. Have each child dictate a complete sentence about each animal. Staple completed book. A group book can also be made by each child contributing a page.

PARAGRAPHS

OBJECTIVE:

The student can dictate several related sentences in sequence.

EXPLANATION:

At this age level paragraphs are usually developed by the class and written by the teacher. Recipes are frequently shared by mother helpers and need to be written for the class to use. Sequencing is introduced at this time. Teacher guidance is needed to organize the material

in proper order. Experience charts (refers to any experiences of children recorded by teacher) are used daily to record information and to plan a routine. Books containing simple paragraphs may be "written" by more mature students with teacher aides or parents writing the stories.

ACTIVITIES:

Tell the students that they are going to make today's snack. After showing them the ingredients, ask them how these things can be used to make a snack. Help them to understand sequence in directions by providing the following model:

1. Wash your hands
2. Scoop out one spoonful of peanut butter
3. Roll it in chocolate chips
4. Put it on a plate until snack time

Each day's activities can be planned with the class. Discuss the daily routine and any special events. Through discussion with the class, make an experience chart that might say the following:

> Today is Monday, June 5, 1978. We are going to see the film, Old Black Witch. For snack time we will make her magical blueberry pancakes.

WRITTEN COMPOSITION SEQUENCE

	KINDERGARTEN	GRADE 1	GRADE 2
WORDS	The student develops a listening and speaking vocabulary. The student can substitute orally specific for general words.	The student continues to develop a listening and speaking vocabulary. The student continues orally to substitute specific for general words.	The student continues to develop a listening and speaking vocabulary. The student can substitute specific for general words.
SENTENCES	The student can express himself/herself in complete oral sentences. The student recognizes that his/her oral language can be written.	The student can write a simple sentence, avoiding fragments.	The student can expand in writing simple sentences, avoiding fragments. The student can recognize and write asking and telling sentences.
PARAGRAPHS	The student can dictate several related sentences in sequence.	The student continues to develop the ability to verbalize and begins to write several related sentences.	The student can write several related sentences in sequence.

COMPOSITION: GRADE 1

INTRODUCTION

First graders show extreme differences in their abilities. Some students' speaking vocabulary and ease of expression reflect a rich background of previous experiences from which to draw concepts and ideas. These concepts and ideas can then be translated into written form. Other students may be equally deficient in these areas. Therefore, the first grade teacher builds on these divergent language abilities, utilizing reading and phonetic skills to develop initial writing skills.

WORDS

OBJECTIVES:

The student continues to develop a listening and speaking vocabulary.

The student continues orally to substitute specific for general words.

EXPLANATION:

In kindergarten emphasis on developing listening and speaking vocabulary results in tremendous growth during the year. A subtle difference between kindergarten and first grade is noticed as word knowledge becomes more sophisticated and refined. Infantile speech patterns become less apparent. In first grade an expanding vocabulary is reinforced by consistent training in developing concepts like categorizing various objects. By using filmstrips, literature, movies, and conversation, other subject areas can be correlated with language arts.

ACTIVITY:

To give children the opportunity to use their thinking vocabulary as part of their writing vocabulary, have students keep their own file box of words they cannot spell phonetically. On 3x5 cards write and accumulate vocabulary words for present and future use. For example: The lion roared ferociously. The child has heard the word but needs to have it written to make it part of his/her writing vocabulary.

The student at this age tends to generalize and needs encouragement to use more specific terms. Brainstorming and questioning techniques by the teacher will help children verbalize new concepts with more specific vocabulary. Teacher use of "new" words frequently encourages the children to enlarge their vocabulary. The first grade student can then begin to make the transition from oral to written language.

ACTIVITY:

Use SCIS Material Objects unit to develop the ability to describe properties. Example: Hold up a pencil. Have children give descriptive words; i.e., yellow, pointed, wooden, etc.

SENTENCES

OBJECTIVE:

Student can write a simple sentence, avoiding fragments.

EXPLANATION:

In first grade simple sentence writing is introduced as soon as reading and phonetic skills are sufficiently developed. Verbalizing the sentence first to the teacher helps the child write a complete sentence without fragments. This bridges the gap between oral and written language.

ACTIVITIES:

Have student make a monster using any art media.

Ask child to describe orally what is happening to the monster. Have him/her write a simple sentence with aid of the teacher.

Have the students make a "Me Book." Discuss with the class the things that make them special: their looks, hobbies, talents, etc. Have them draw a picture of their face for the cover. Yarn may be used for the hair, if they wish. On each page have them write a sentence about something they like to do; their favorite food, a pet, or a friend.

PARAGRAPHS:

OBJECTIVE:

The student continues to develop the ability to verbalize and begins to write several related sentences.

EXPLANATION:

In first grade, as in kindergarten, paragraphs are developed by the group and written by the teacher. Children may copy the story on their own paper if the teacher so desires. The story may also be used as an experience chart for practice in reading. Some first graders may be able to write simple paragraphs by June.

ACTIVITY:

Cut out pictures from magazines. Hold the pictures up for the class to see. Ask, "What do you think happened first?" As class responds, teacher writes story on chart and helps class expand and verbalize the ideas. This experience corresponds roughly to paragraph development in writing.

WRITTEN COMPOSITION SEQUENCE

	GRADE 1	GRADE 2	GRADE 3
WORDS	The student continues to develop a listening and speaking vocabulary. The student continues orally to substitute specific for general words.	The student continues to develop a listening and speaking vocabulary. The student can substitute specific for general words.	The student continues to substitute specific for general words.
SENTENCES	The student can write a simple sentence, avoiding fragments.	The student can expand in writing simple sentences, avoiding fragments. The student can recognize and write asking and telling sentences.	The student can expand simple sentences primarily through the use of adjective modifiers. The student can, with direction, use various sentence types in writing sentences: interrogative, declarative, imperative, and exclamatory.
PARAGRAPHS	The student continues to develop the ability to verbalize and begins to write several related sentences.	The student can write several related sentences in sequence.	The student can recognize paragraph indentation. The student is introduced to and can write simple topic sentences. The student continues to construct several sentences in sequence about one topic.

COMPOSITION: GRADE 2

INTRODUCTION

In the transition from first to second grade, more emphasis is placed on written work. Therefore, the second grade students should write daily. Such activities as dictation or letter writing can often be done in a group. Spelling and handwriting lessons are frequently used to practice dictation. As students begin to work independently, the teacher encourages them to use more descriptive words. The teacher plays an important role in motivating the students to use personal feelings and ideas in their writing.

WORDS

OBJECTIVES:

The student continues to develop a listening and speaking vocabulary.

The student can substitute specific for general words.

EXPLANATION:

As the student matures he/she is continually exposed to many new words. Often the second grade child enjoys experimenting with these new words. Unique descriptions often are the result, i.e., "I just picked a herd of strawberries." Words a child has heard must now be verbalized "correctly" so they can become a useful part of their vocabulary.

ACTIVITY:

Discuss new words brought up by the students. Make a list for the room containing all the new words. Encourage children to use these words.

Students entering second grade will make the transition from oral to written language. They will begin to expand their written vocabulary

by substituting vivid words for over-used words. An example of this could be changing the sentence, "The cat goes up the tree," to "The cat climbs up the tree."

ACTIVITY:

Brainstorm with the class. Put the word "go" on the board. Ask the class to list other ways to tell how people, animals or objects "go." Some responses could be: run, walk, climb, crawl, slither.

SENTENCES

OBJECTIVES:

Student can expand in writing simple sentences, avoiding fragments.

The student can recognize and write asking and telling sentences.

EXPLANATION:

In first grade simple sentence writing is introduced during the year. The second grader can expand on this sentence writing by using descriptive words. An example of this expansion is changing a sentence like, "I saw the leaves," to, "I saw the leaves falling." Fragments are avoided by verbalizing the sentence to the teacher before it is written.

ACTIVITY:

Tell the children to look at this two word sentence, "Firemen came." Explain to the class that we make sentences grow by adding words at the beginning and at the end. An example would be, "The brave firemen came down the ladder."

In first grade children have only a vague idea of the difference between an asking and a telling sentence. Second graders begin to use asking and telling sentences in their written work.

ACTIVITIES:

Ask the class what the following sentence is called: "There are many birds in the trees." (Answer: Telling sentence) Now put the words in this order: "Are there many birds in the trees?" Ask the class what kind of sentence do you have now? (Answer: Asking sentence)

Have the class write these telling sentences as questions:

1. Bob is going swimming.
2. It is too late to go now.
3. The clock has stopped.

PARAGRAPHS

OBJECTIVE:

The student can write several related sentences in sequence.

EXPLANATION:

In second grade writing several related sentences in sequence is reinforced by daily writing, individually and as a group. The ideas chosen for this type of writing should be ones the students can relate to personally. The teacher will need to help the students arrange their ideas in sequence. Verbalizing the story first helps the student to do this.

ACTIVITIES:

Cut out pictures from magazines that show people/animals doing funny things. Pick one from the pile and brainstorm with the class on what is happening in the picture. Write their ideas down on the board. When you feel the class is ready to do their own, hand out pictures and have them write several related sentences in sequence.

Discuss how we celebrate birthdays. Have the children make a birthday book in the shape of a cake. In a brief paragraph, children must tell how old they are and what they did on their birthdays.

WRITTEN COMPOSITION SEQUENCE

	GRADE 2	GRADE 3	GRADE 4
WORDS	The student continues to develop a listening and speaking vocabulary. The student can substitute specific for general words.	The student continues to substitute specific for general words.	The student continues to substitute specific for general words. The student can use sensory details and simple comparisons in describing more vivivly persons, places, and things.
SENTENCES	The student can expand in writing simple sentences, avoiding fragments. The student can recognize and write asking and telling sentences.	The student can expand simple sentences primarily through the use of adjective modifiers. The student can, with direction, use various sentence types in writing sentences: interrogative, declarative, imperative, and exclamatory.	The student can expand sentences through the use of words and phrases, using adverb and adjective modifiers.
PARAGRAPHS	The student can write several related sentences in sequence.	The student can recognize paragraph indentation. The student is introduced to and can write simple topic sentences. The student continues to construct several sentences in sequence about one topic.	The student can recognize the form of a paragraph as a visual unit. The student can write and develop a factual topic statement and develop it by details which answer the question "What?"

COMPOSITION: GRADE 3

INTRODUCTION

The majority of second and third graders, under teacher direction, are willing and able to use their imaginations when writing. In the process they should not be penalized for inconsistencies, abrupt changes in tense or situation, or lack of organization. It is crucial at this stage that they develop a positive sense of their abilities.

The enthusiasm the teacher portrays for any given assignment will be reflected in the students' writing. The teacher can, however, direct their thinking along the lines of the given topic, yet allow the students ample opportunities to express their feelings. Remembering that younger students' responses can vary from moment to moment, the teacher should choose topics to which the student can easily relate. The role of the teacher in relation to student motivation cannot be minimized.

WORDS

OBJECTIVE:

The student continues to substitute specific for general words.

EXPLANATION:

Students entering third grade will continue to expand their written vocabulary by using a variety of vivid rather than general words. In grade 2 the student has made the transition from oral to written language and still uses more general words from his/her speaking vocabulary to communicate ideas in writing. Whereas the second grader is inclined to write, "The cat climbs up the tree," the third grader works on making the verb climbs more specific by changing it to, "The cat scampered up the tree."

ACTIVITY:

Have the class make a dictionary on vivid words: nouns, verbs, and adjectives. Brainstorm with the class for over-used words and have students list them in their dictionary alphabetically. As they list the "tired words," brainstorm for vivid words which should also be listed on the page. An example is to put "big" on the top of the page and then have the class list synonyms underneath it like gigantic, huge, over-size, super, etc. Now would be a good time to introduce the thesaurus, In Other Words, and show them how to use this book to expand their vocabulary.

SENTENCES

OBJECTIVES:

The student can expand simple sentences primarily through the use of adjective modifiers.

The student can, with direction, use various sentence types in writing sentences: interrogative, declarative, imperative, and exclamatory.

EXPLANATION:

It is not nearly as important to use terms like adjective and modifiers as it is to practice using these words to expand sentences in writing. In the second grade the student learned to expand a sentence from, "I saw the leaves," to "I saw the leaves falling." Now in the third grade the student can expand this to read, "I saw the orange and red leaves falling."

ACTIVITY:

Give students a list of single sentences like: "Man works," "Frogs splash," and "Babies crawl," and have them expand these sentences with adjective modifiers. Encourage them to use both their dictionaries and In Other Words to complete this activity.

Students in the third grade can also include various sentence types that are appropriate to their paragraph. This is the beginning of encouraging variety in sentence structure, though the forms of variety are limited to: interrogative, declarative, imperative and exclamatory.

ACTIVITY:

Have the class write several sentences on the following topic: "What would happen if animals took over the world?" This assignment encourages the use of exclamatory statements. Similiar assignments can be used for other sentence types.

PARAGRAPHS

OBJECTIVES:

The student can recognize paragraph indentation.

The student is introduced to and can write simple topic sentences.

The student continues to construct several sentences in sequence about a given topic.

EXPLANATION:

The third grade student is formally introduced to the concept of a paragraph and when looking at a page can recognize paragraph indentation. At this point the teaching of the paragraph is strictly visual. The formal teaching of the topic sentence is introduced for the first time and the placement of the topic sentence will always be first in the paragraph.

ACTIVITIES:

Have the students read the following paragraph and supply a topic sentence that might possibly begin the paragraph:

_____. I saw clouds that looked like covered wagons, rolling across prairies. Once I saw a huge cloud giant with a flowing cape and long fingers. He grabbed the nose of a cloud bear. I laughed when that happened.

Write the following paragraph on the board:

Tiger Swallowtail was one the showiest of the butterflies. His wings with their tail-like parts were bright yellow with black stripes, something like a tiger's coat. That's why he was called "Tiger."

Point out to the students how the other sentences are related to the topic sentences. Have students make up and write additional topic sentences drawn from their own experiences.

In the second grade the students learned to write several related sentences about one topic. The third grade student reinforces this skill and continues to develop in sequence a paragraph about a more specific topic. Whereas the second grader writes about a topic like "my birthday," the third grader is more inclined to write about an incident that happened on his birthday.

ACTIVITIES:

To help the student develop the skill of writing sentences in a logical sequence, have them put sequence cards in order and write sentences about them.

Ask the students to complete one of the following topic sentences: (Remember these topic sentences should relate to the child's personal feelings.) "I am afraid of ...", "What I like to do most is ...," "If I could fly a jet, I would go to ...," etc. Choosing one and doing it together, pointing out the need of logical sequencing, will be very beneficial to the students.

WRITTEN COMPOSITION SEQUENCE

	GRADE 3	GRADE 4	GRADE 5
WORDS	The student continues to substitute specific for general words.	The student continues to substitute specific for general words. The student can use sensory details and simple comparisons in describing more vividly persons, places, and things.	The student continues to substitute specific for general words. The student can use similes to strengthen the visual meaning of sentences.
SENTENCES	The student can expand simple sentences primarily through the use of adjective modifiers. The student can, with direction, use various sentence types in writing sentences: interrogative, declarative, imperative, and exclamatory.	The student can expand sentences through the use of words and phrases, using adverb and adjective modifiers.	The student can change the position of word and phrase modifiers to vary the sentences within the paragraph.
PARAGRAPHS	The student can recognize paragraph identation. The student is introduced to and can write simple topic sentences. The student continues to construct several sentences in sequence about one topic.	The student can recognize the form of a paragraph as a visual unit. The student can write and develop a factual topic statement and develop it by details which answer the question "What?"	The student can write a topic statement with a key word or phrase that is developed by answering the question "Why?" or "How?" and can relate the sentences in the paragraph to the topic statement.

COMPOSITION: GRADE 4

INTRODUCTION

The majority of students entering the fourth grade have a very positive attitude towards written expression. During their primary years, they have progressed in composition skills from verbalizing experiences and expressing feelings to constructing and writing several sentences in sequence about a given topic. In the fourth grade, the teacher continues to develop the students' positive attitude toward writing through motivation and brainstorming techniques, while at the same time, integrating more formal composition skills. The emphasis now is on incorporating feelings, ordering sentences into coherent experiences with paragraphs, and revising for improvement. At the intermediate level the key elements in writing instruction are frequency and revision.

In the fourth grade, students will be given varied writing assignments. Fourth graders usually enjoy personal letter writing activities. After an examination of a model friendly letter, most fourth graders are able to write one in correct form. To make letter-writing conventions even more meaningful to students, they should write in correct form friendly letters such as thank-you or get-well notes that they are really going to mail.

WORDS

OBJECTIVES:

The student continues to substitute specific for general words.

The student can use sensory details and simple comparisons in describing more vividly persons, places, and things.

EXPLANATION:

In the third grade, students have been encouraged to substitute specific for general words. This skill is reinforced in the fourth grade,

along with choosing appropriate describing adjectives and substituting strong verbs for weak ones. There are many activities designed to help students write more vivid details by adding descriptive words or substituting more specific or more vivid words in their sentence.

ACTIVITY:

Write the following sentence on the blackboard or show it on an overhead projector: "The animal was in the grass." Ask students to make this sentence more interesting. Can they name a particular kind of animal? (dog, cat, etc.) Can they think of a word or two to describe it? (tired, ugly) Can they say something more interesting than just "was"? (slithered, crawled, loped) What about the grass? Was it tall, green, dewy, dead, snow-covered? The revised sentence could be, "The golden retriever puppy romped in the tall, green grass." Point out again what was done to make the sentence more real to the reader.

Students entering the fourth grade are also encouraged to use sensory details and some simple comparisons in their descriptive sentences. Good describing words will help them to see, hear, smell, feel, or taste something.

ACTIVITY:

Say a word that will project a sense image. Have students respond with the first descriptive word or phrase they think of. Write the responses on the board. As a group, decide to which sense--seeing, hearing, feeling, tasting or smelling--each response appeals. Some suggestions may appeal to several senses. A stimulus word could be "fudge brownies." Responses could be warm, sweet, chocolate, nutty, moist, brown, crunchy, etc. What senses do these responses appeal to? General descriptive words such as pretty, good, little, etc. should be discouraged in this activity.

Students are also taught in the fourth grade that they can use comparisons to make what they have to say more interesting and clear. The sentence, "The grass feels wet," could be changed to read, "The grass feels like a puppy's cold, wet nose." "The honey is sticky," can also

be changed to read, "The honey is as sticky as warm chewing gum."

ACTIVITY:

Ask students to think of interesting ideas to complete the following comparisons. It should be explained that they can use the words like or as to show comparisons:

a. as quiet as _____
b. as slippery as _____
c. warm as _____
d. _____ like a flower
e. _____ sounded like _____

Students can suggest sentences for their phrases that will help to use comparisons in their writing.

SENTENCES

OBJECTIVE:

The student can expand sentences through the use of words and phrases using adverb and adjective modifiers.

EXPLANATION:

Students entering the fourth grade level have had experience expanding simple sentences through the use of adjective modifiers. In the fourth grade, they will focus their attention, not only on adjective modifiers, but also on how adverb words and phrases expand sentences. For example, the third grade student might expand the basic sentence, "Jets fly," to "The shiny, silvery jets fly." The fourth grade student further expands this sentence to read, "The shiny, silvery jets fly swiftly and gracefully across the blue sky." It is important to stress the fact that additional words help give sentences a more exact meaning, but the mere addition of adjectives and adverbs does not change the basic sentence pattern.

PARAGRAPHS

OBJECTIVES:

The student can recognize the form of a paragraph as a visual unit.

The student can write and develop a factual topic sentence and develop it by details which answer the question "What?"

EXPLANATION:

In the third grade, students have been introduced to the concept of a paragraph and have had experiences constructing several sentences about one topic. A primary objective at the fourth grade level is that the student can write a clear factual topic sentence and develop it by details which answer the question "What?" To master this objective, the student must first develop a sense of the paragraph as a visual unit. To do this, he/she will need to recognize the importance of proper paragraph indentation and understand that the sentences in each paragraph tell about one idea. Students should be able to form one picture in their minds from each paragraph and to recognize that indentation of the first word of each paragraph is begun when a new idea is introduced.

In writing a factual topic sentence, students should know that the topic statement tells what the paragraph is about, and the person, place, or thing described in the paragraph appears in the topic sentence. In order to write a "factual" topic sentence, children also learn to distinguish between fact and opinion. Examples of fact and how it differs from opinion should be stressed. A sample factual topic sentence is,

"George Washington was our first President." A topic sentence giving an opinion is, "George Washington was our best President."

Once the factual topic sentence is written, it needs to be developed with supporting details. A biographical sketch is an excellent assignment to achieve this goal. Another possible approach is to describe an object exactly as the senses perceive it.

ACTIVITY:

Ask the students to read the following paragraph describing the moon and to write their own description of an object that interests them, using only one of their senses.

> The round moon is very bright. It gives enough light so I can easily locate my dog walking in the backyard. There is no smog to dim the light. No clouds hide it from view.

Another type of paragraph development is to arrange details in chronological order. In order to help students organize their details in chronological order, they should be encouraged to use in their writing cue words such as first, after that, not long after, finally, then, at last, later, and next.

ACTIVITY:

Ask students to write a descriptive paragraph, organizing the details in chronological order. A topic, describing the way mother fixes a favorite food, can be suggested. A typical response may read as follows:

> I like to watch my mother fixing dinner when we are having steak and potatoes. First mother preheats the oven. She then sprinkles the steaks with seasoning salt and black pepper and puts them under the broiler. After that, she peels the potatoes and slices them very thin. When she fries them in hot oil, they turn a golden-brown and are a little crisp. She then prepares some fresh vegetables for us because she wants our meal to be balanced. By the time she calls my sister to set the table, everything is almost ready and the steaks smell so good that no one has to be called to dinner twice. This is my favorite dinner.

WRITTEN COMPOSITION SEQUENCE

	GRADE 4	GRADE 5	GRADE 6
WORDS	The student continues to substitute specific for general words. The student can use sensory details and simple comparisons in describing more vividly persons, places, and things.	The student continues to substitute specific for general words. The student can use similes to strengthen the visual meaning of sentences.	The student continues to substitute specific words for general words.
SENTENCES	The student can expand sentences through the use of words and phrases, using adverb and adjective modifiers.	The student can change the position of word and phrase modifiers to vary the sentences within the paragraph.	The student reduces repetitious simple sentence structures by combining them with connectives and with modifiers.
PARAGRAPHS	The student can recognize the form of a paragraph as a visual unit. The student can write and develop a factual topic statement and develop it by details which answer the question "What?"	The student can write a topic statement with a key word or phrase that is developed by answering the question "Why?" or "How?" and can relate the sentences in the paragraph to the topic statement.	The student can intensify and refine the topic statement. The student can place the topic statement properly within the paragraph. The student can write concluding statements which reiterate an important word or phrase.

COMPOSITION: GRADE 5

INTRODUCTION

Fifth grade students have had varied experiences in writing activities during previous years. They have progressed from writing in a very creative setting to a more formal and structured one. Since fifth grade students are asked to begin analyzing their work more critically, they need stimulation and guidance in writing clear, vivid prose.

Effective composition requires purpose and planning. Conscious choice of words and ideas is essential. Fifth grade students are still developing their ability to use exact words and meaningful descriptions in writing. They need to become more specific and concrete in their use of descriptive terms. Awareness is reinforced that vague, abstract writing tends to be dull and uninteresting. As students progress through the fifth grade, they should develop a sense of pride in their ability to select precise, meaningful expressions.

Greater understanding of paragraph unity is also emphasized in the fifth grade. Fifth grade deals with the kind of expository writing that explains "how to do something." In the areas of science and social studies, students are required to write reports of various types. Teachers can select several well-written paragraphs from science and social studies texts to present as examples of good paragraph unity. Fifth grade students discover with teacher assistance how all sentences in such a paragraph tie in with the topic sentence. As students begin to see the relationship of a topic sentence to the subject matter of a paragraph and analyze the unity of a paragraph, they will begin to write a paragraph that has unity and will develop the topic sentence by answering the question "Why?" or "How?" For students to become

proficient writers, it is important to note that they need this direct teaching and much practice in communication skills.

WORDS

OBJECTIVES:

The student continues to substitute specific for general words.

The student can use similes to strengthen the visual meaning of sentences.

EXPLANATION:

In the fifth grade, continued emphasis should be placed on the practice of using specific nouns and verbs for more precise meaning and for choosing appropriate describing words and adverbs. Through various activities, students should be able to make their writing more specific. The following activity provides experience in improving writing through modification and word choice.

ACTIVITY:

Write this sentence on the board or overhead transparency: "The boy looked at the ball." Try to elicit that no one could tell from the sentence exactly what the writer had in mind. There is no clear picture of the boy, how he looked at the ball, or what kind of ball it was. Have students suggest definite words or phrases to describe the boy. Write these on the board. Then ask whether "looked" is definite enough. Ask for more precise verbs, and list these on the board--stared, glared, gazed, admired, etc. Now ask for words or phrases describing how the boy might have stared, glared, etc., and list these on the board. Call for describing words or phrases for the ball also--baseball, basketball, brand new ball, dirty old ball, etc. List these.

Help the group formulate several sentences that give a more specific picture than, "The boy looked at the ball." Have students compare their new sentences with the original. Sentences created by the group might grow to such proportions as the following: "The grinning boy in the bleachers gazed proudly at the new major league baseball." or "With tears in his eyes, the unhappy little boy stared at the remains of his softball, ruined by the tractor trailer." When the students

have completed their work, have a number of the revised sentences written on the board for examination. Bring out the importance of specific words and the flexibility of adverbial modifiers.

Besides using specific words to give sparkle and life to dull sentences, students are encouraged to use similes in their writing to strengthen the visual meaning of sentences. Students were taught in the fourth grade that they can use comparisons to make what they have to say more interesting and clear. Now the students are ready to define a simile and, under direction, to use it effectively in writing. A simile is defined as a comparison between two unlike objects by using the words like or as. It can also be pointed out that they can compare two objects by saying something "is" something else. The labels, simile and metaphor, however, are not so important as the ability to use such figures of speech effectively in writing.

Similes can be developed by giving the students a list of partially completed comparisons: My horse was as tired as _____. Mom's pie tasted like _____. Discuss what two things are being compared and how the compared things are alike. Another means of developing similes could involve giving the students pairs of unrelated objects and having them determine how they are alike: a puppy and a young boy, a grapefruit and a frown, or a boulder and a grandparent. Students can also compare similar paragraphs, one with similes and one without, to determine the appeal of simile-rich paragraphs.

SENTENCES

OBJECTIVE:

The student can change the position of word and phrase modifiers and to vary the sentences within the paragraph.

EXPLANATION:

Students entering the fifth grade level have had experience expanding sentences through the use of word and phrase modifiers and will now

focus on changing the position of word and phrase modifiers and on varying the sentences within a paragraph. In the fourth grade the basic sentence expanded by the use of modifiers would read: "The shiny, silvery jets flew swiftly and gracefully across the blue sky." A fifth grade student should, for example, be able to change the sentence order for variety: "Swiftly and gracefully, the shiny, silvery jets flew across the blue sky." This would avoid each sentence in the paragraph starting with, "The shiny silvery jets..." It is important to stress the fact that the different order of phrases does not change the basic meaning of the sentence.

PARAGRAPHS

OBJECTIVE:

The student can write a topic sentence with a key word or phrase that is developed by answering the question "Why?" or "How?" and can relate the sentences in the paragraph to the topic statement.

EXPLANATION:

In the fourth grade, students have written factual topic sentences and developed paragraphs by answering the question "What?" In the fifth grade this should be developed further. Students should be able to write a topic sentence with a key word or phrase that is developed by answering the question "Why?" or "How?" A major concern now is the development of the topic sentence that contains a key word or phrase as the controlling idea in the paragraph.

It is not important at this level to label the type of organization that the paragraph assumes. What is important is that the topic sentence can now be considered as an opinion or a point of view of one person.

The students can then develop the topic sentence into a paragraph by supplying relevant details, answering the questions "How?" or "Why?" For example, a topic sentence that contains key words as a controlling idea is,"My favorite food is pizza." The students would develop a paragraph that explains "why" pizza is their favorite food and even "how" they might like to eat it. Some examples of topic statements that include a key word or phrase are:

a. A little brother can make life miserable.

b. Children should have an allowance.

c. A dog is really man's best friend.

d. It was the coldest day of the year.

These paragraphs should be developed by answering questions such as "How?" and "Why?" and "How do you know?" They deal mainly with facts.

A writing assignment that can help demonstrate the understanding of paragraph unity is one that explains "How to do something." In such a paragraph, the sentences are usually arranged in time order. Students discover how all sentences in such a paragraph tie in with the controlling topic sentence.

ACTIVITY:

Ask students to write a paragraph explaining how to make or do something familiar. Although students should be able to choose a topic, several suggestions would be:

a. How To Make Popcorn
b. How To Ride a Bike
c. How To Bake Cookies
d. How To Train a Pet
e. How To Fly a Kite
f. How To Play (A Game)
g. How To Feed and Care for a Goldfish

After students complete their writing, allow them to share their explanations. Take one or two examples and try to follow them literally before the group. Students might need to re-examine their work to see if:

1. Sentences are arranged in proper order.
2. All important steps are included.
3. Details are clear and exact.
4. All sentences are related to the main idea.

Another excellent assignment to focus on in fifth grade is the business letter. After an examination of a model business letter, most fifth graders are able to write one in correct form. Students become aware that the body of the business letter is most important. As in the "how to" paragraph, the details of the body paragraph should be as clear and exact as possible. It should be brief and include only necessary details but still include all the information the receiver needs to know.

ACTIVITY:

Ask students to write business letters requesting information or ordering something from a catalog. Guide students in preparing their letters so that the form is correct and the body is short and specific. Use classroom projects as opportunities to have students write business letters requesting information, art supplies, tickets for field trips, and so on. The catalog of "Free and Inexpensive Learning Materials," provides ample suggestions to find free materials on many subjects they might be studying.

WRITTEN COMPOSITION SEQUENCE

	GRADE 5	GRADE 6	GRADE 7
WORDS	The student continues to substitute specific for general words. The student can use similes to strengthen the visual meaning of sentences.	The student continues to substitute specific words for general words.	The student can select words in writing with varied nuances of meanings.
SENTENCES	The student can change the position of word and phrase modifiers to vary the sentences within the paragraph.	The student reduces repetitious simple sentence structures by combining them with connectives and with modifiers.	The student reduces repetitious simple and compound sentence structures by using complex sentences in writing.
PARAGRAPHS	The student can write a topic sentence with a key word or phrase that is developed by answering the question "Why?" or "How?" and can relate the sentences in the paragraph to the topic statement.	The student can intensify and refine the topic statement. The student can place the topic statement properly within the paragraph. The student can write concluding statements which reiterate an important word or phrase.	The student can write a narrative paragraph developed by chronological order or by order of importance. The student can write a descriptive paragraph, including sensory details, developed by order of location.

COMPOSITION: GRADE 6

INTRODUCTION

Sixth graders begin to struggle with increasingly complex thoughts which result in problems with word choice and sentence structure. Accordingly, at this level teachers focus on helping students to order their ideas and encouraging them to use a more sophisticated vocabulary which enables them to express themselves with more confidence and precision in writing. Most sixth graders will benefit from structured assignments to improve organizational skills.

Writing newspaper articles is an excellent vehicle for achieving word, sentence, and paragraph objectives at this level. Students study the parts of a newspaper and compose news stories which include specific facts, answering the questions who, what, where, when, and why. Some classes may publish a newspaper. Editing and proofreading are important aspects of these activities.

WORDS

OBJECTIVES:

The student continues to substitute specific for general words.

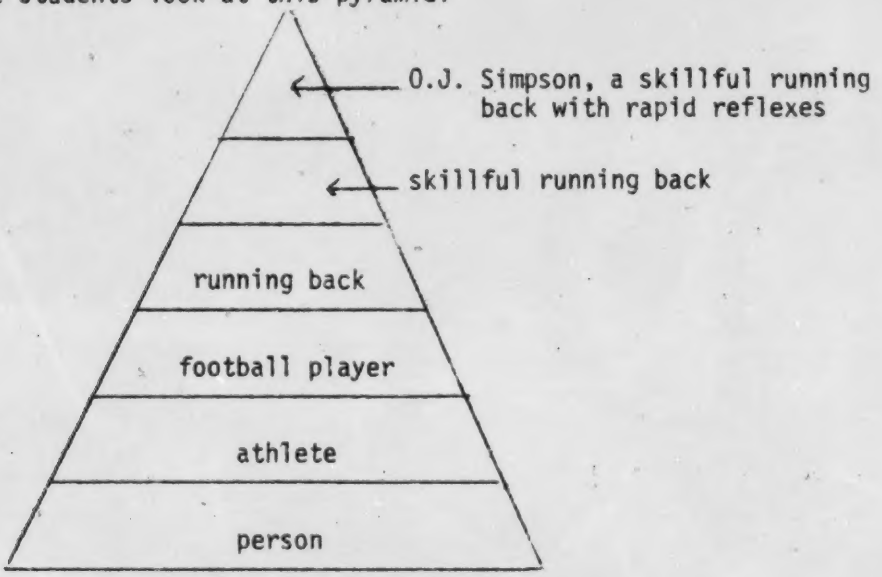
EXPLANATION:

Sixth grade students will continue to emphasize, on the appropriate level of difficulty, the use of specific nouns, verbs, and descriptive adjectives, adverbs, and phrases. This objective has been introduced and developed in previous grades.

To help the students avoid vague, dull ambiguities and enable them to express themselves clearly, students must become aware of levels of abstraction. They need to develop the ability to narrow a general term to a more specific, image-provoking description.

ACTIVITY:

Have students look at this pyramid:



1. What word is at the base of the pyramid?

   _____

   In this case, the word stands for a person in a story.

2. Look at the second level of the pyramid. What kind of person is it?

   _____

3. As the sides of the pyramid narrow, the words become more exact and specific until the top point is reached. By the time the point is reached, what do you know about the person?

   _____

   _____

Select words from the students' papers which can be discussed and developed in a similar fashion.

SENTENCES

OBJECTIVE:

The student reduces repetitious simple sentence structures by combining them with connectives and with modifiers.

EXPLANATION:

Students entering the sixth grade have had experience changing the position of word and phrase modifiers and varying the sentence pattern. In the sixth grade, the emphasis is placed on combining short sentences to achieve smoother, more mature writing. For example, the sentences, "The pencil was broken," and "It was in John's hand," can be combined into a single sentence in more than one way: "The broken pencil was in John's hand," or "The pencil in John's hand was broken." Another way of combining sentences is through the use of connectives such as and, but, or, nor, for, so, yet. This can be shown by the following sentences: "I am short. My sister is tall." These two sentences can be joined with a connective to read, "My sister is tall, but I am short."

ACTIVITY:

Write the following short sentences on the board or overhead:

1. A dog bit my sister.
2. The dog was big.
3. The dog was shaggy.

Ask the students to combine this set of sentences into a single sentence. Tell them that they can use connectives or modifiers. Stress that their sentence must contain all of the information in the sentences listed. A response could be, "A big, shaggy dog bit my sister."

PARAGRAPHS

OBJECTIVES:

The student can intensify and refine the topic statement.

The student can place the topic statement properly within the paragraph.

The student can write concluding statements which reiterate an important word or phrase.

EXPLANATION:

Sixth graders continue to develop and refine the topic sentence within the paragraph. Practice should be given in writing more accurate and appropriate controlling sentences. For example, "Television is fun," could be refined to read, "I enjoy watching a wide variety of television programs." Importance is given to the relevance of details which develop the topic statement so that paragraph unity is emphasized, along with an increased focus on sentence-to-sentence fluency.

Although the topic sentence is most frequently found at the beginning of a paragraph, the students should be able to demonstrate their understanding that the central idea in a paragraph may be stated at the end of the paragraph.

Sixth grade students should also become aware that the concluding statement in a paragraph can reiterate an important word or phrase of the topic sentence. Concluding statements are usually expected to summarize the paragraph, providing a unifying device by echoing a key word or idea.

ACTIVITIES:

Have students read the following paragraph and then write an original paragraph of five to eight sentences where the topic sentence comes at the end of the paragraph.

> As he looked around, everything seemed distorted and strange. The trees seemed to have mirrors for leaves. The path he was following was curved and twisted, with no apparent direction. Everything seemed to move and sway dizzily. This was the worst nightmare he had ever had.

Ask students to write a paragraph that reiterates an important word in the concluding sentence as an "echo word." A sample paragraph could be:

> Shasta, my dog, is the smartest dog in Chelmsford. She is a good babysitter for my little brother. When she sees us packing to go camping, Shasta gets her dish and blanket and waits for us by the car. While at dog obedience school, she learned to tap out her age with her paw. Even my friends agree that Shasta is the most intelligent dog in town.

WRITTEN COMPOSITION SEQUENCE

	GRADE 6	GRADE 7	GRADE 8
WORDS	The student continues to substitute specific words for general words.	The student can select words in writing with varied nuances of meanings.	The student can distinguish and use in writing connotation and denotation.
SENTENCES	The student reduces repetitious simple sentence structures by combining them with connectives and with modifiers.	The student reduces repetitious simple and compound sentence structures by using complex sentences in writing.	The student continues to develop the use of simple, compound, and complex sentences in writing.
PARAGRAPHS	The student can intensify and refine the topic statement. The student can place the topic statement properly within the paragraph. The student can write concluding statements which reiterate an important word or phrase.	The student can write a narrative paragraph developed by chronological order or by order of importance. The student can write a descriptive paragraph, including sensory details, developed by order of location.	The student can write simple expository paragraphs of process, explanation, and opinion.

COMPOSITION: GRADE 7

INTRODUCTION

Seventh graders are generally enthusiastic and eager to learn but are insecure. Usually they look for immediate gratification of their needs and desires. The attitudes and values of respected teachers may be assumed as trial models for the students seeking more adult roles. Typically, seventh graders have a short attention span, are physically restless, and are dependent upon adults for emotional security. Nevertheless, they enjoy the challenge of changing classes and of encountering different teachers in the separate subject areas. In spite of an outward show of exuberance, they are often inwardly fearful of their ability to meet the teacher's expectations. In a group, their own feelings of inadequacy often lead them to insensitivity toward others. Individually, however, they are usually sympathetic and understanding.

Seventh grade students are individuals who proceed at their own pace and at varying rates. Although the majority of seventh graders will be able to achieve the following objectives, a small group will exceed those expectations, and another group will be unable to attain them. In addition, the seventh grade teacher must be aware that some students are unable to deal with abstract concepts until greater maturity is achieved. Therefore, writing assignments using narration and description are appropriate because they can be developed on a concrete level.

WORDS

OBJECTIVE:

The student can select words in writing with varied nuances of meanings.

EXPLANATION:

Students entering seventh grade should be able to choose nouns and verbs to indicate exact meaning and to select appropriate descriptive adjectives and adverbs. Now they need to understand and make use of the subtle distinctions between similar words. Exercises can be used to help students understand the varied nuances of closely related words. Because students are encouraged to explore new word choices, the use of a thesaurus is particularly appropriate. A thesaurus provides synonyms for such common adjectives as thin, long, large, soft, hard, quiet, dark, or light, some of which are positively or negatively shaded in meaning. For example, a young woman could be described as thin, slender, scrawny, or svelte. The students can be asked to determine the most favorable and the least favorable word choice.

ACTIVITIES:

Ask students to complete the following paragraph with two separate sets of adjectives so that a positive or negative interpretation can be developed.

My parents decided to have dinner at a _____ restaurant last evening. It was about 6:30 when we entered the _____ and _____ dining room. After a while the _____ hostess seated us at a _____ table. As we scanned the _____ menus that our _____ waiter had handed us, we were confronted with _____ choices.

Word choices for the first blank might be "well-known" or "notorious." For the next pair of blanks it might be "softly-lit and intimate" or "gloomy and cramped." Would you choose "efficient," "busy," or "overworked" for the fourth blank?

Have students write a descriptive paragraph. Then ask them to work with a set number of words to change the overall tone of the paragraph. Ask them to develop a more positive or more negative slant by choosing specific synonyms that change the effect of the paragraph.

SENTENCES

OBJECTIVE:

The student reduces repetitious simple and compound sentence structures by using complex sentences in writing.

EXPLANATION:

Students entering seventh grade have had practice in reducing repetitious structures of simple sentences. They have learned to combine simple sentences by using coordinating connectives (and, but, or, nor, for, so) and by making use of modifiers. Students will now focus on the idea of subordinating ideas to develop complex sentences. A compound sentence like, "Eve quickly drew back her hand, and the spring slammed the door shut," might develop into, "When Eve quickly drew back her hand, the spring slammed the door shut."

The emphasis in the seventh grade is now placed on using connectives that subordinate one idea to another. It should be emphasized that it is not as important to use terms like coordination and subordination as it is to provide students with various opportunities to combine sentences. The students should be encouraged to pair the sentences in a variety of ways to discover the differences in meaning that can develop as well as the various possibilities for combining them. Likewise, students should be asked to develop related simple sentences and to practice combining them; this will improve the maturity of their syntax.

ACTIVITY:

Give students paired sets of simple sentences and ask them to choose methods of combining them by using words from a list of connectives (because, since, when, as although, if, while, after, which, who, that, whose, etc.). When the sentences have been combined appropriately, point out that one idea is now less important than the other.

PARAGRAPHS

OBJECTIVES:

The student can write a narrative paragraph developed by chronological order or by order of importance.

The student can write a descriptive paragraph, including sensory details, developed by order of location.

EXPLANATION:

By the time the student reaches seventh grade, he/she has had experience in developing a paragraph with a topic statement and supporting details. The student is now ready to develop a paragraph following a specific type of organization. Accordingly, the seventh grade student writes descriptive paragraphs developed by order of location and narrative paragraphs developed by chronological order or order of importance.

An important type of paragraph development in the seventh grade is the narrative paragraph. It can be developed in chronological order using a brief incident or ancedote from personal experience that can be used to illustrate a point.

ACTIVITIES:

Ask students to read the following paragraph by E. B. White as an illustration of a narrative incident used to develop topic statement.

> Although I refuse to believe that she is a silly creature, I will admit that the hen is a rather unpredictable one and sometimes manages to surprise even an old friend and admirer like myself. Last December, after about sixteen weeks of collecting eggs in my laying house without causing any undue alarm among the birds, I went in one mornigg wearing a wristwatch my wife had given me for Christmas. I opened the first deck of nests and thrust my hand in under a hen to pull the eggs out. The hen took one look at the watch and shrieked, "A time bomb!" Instantly, the whole house was in an uproar, with hens trampling each other in a mad rush for the corners. This sort of panicky behavior causes some people to regard the hen as a silly creature.

Ask students to identify the topic sentence. Explain that the author has used a brief story to illustrate what he means. Ask the students if the story does show that the hen is unpredictable. Point out to the students that the last sentence is not part of the incident but a concluding statement that reiterates the main idea.

Have the students suggest a number of topic sentences that could be developed in this manner. Ask each student to choose a topic sentence and write a paragraph using a brief story that shows what the topic sentence means. Stress the importance of using a good concluding statement in the paragraph.

In descriptive paragraphs, the visual details of a scene can be placed in logical spatial order or order of location. For instance, a description of a scene could begin at the top and work down or vice-versa. Similarly, a paragraph could be arranged to describe a scene working from farthest away to closest details.

ACTIVITIES:

Ask students to list the visual details of a specific scene. Explain the different methods of setting these details in order and ask the students to arrange their details according to one of the methods. After the details have been arranged in sequence, students should be encouraged to utilize previously acquired skills in word choice and sentence expansion techniques. Then the use of transitional expressions (below, around, among, under, above, ahead, next to, on top of, on the other side, beneath, further on, and nearer to) should be discussed. Students should see that these words are aids in locating the details of the description. Finally, ask the students to incorporate this material into a descriptive paragraph. Some suggested topics for descriptive writing assignments are the following: A ski slope, the beach, a Christmas tree, a baseball field, the scene from a window, or the school cafeteria.

Then ask them to incorporate a descriptive or a narrative paragraph in a social or business letter. Seventh grade students might write a letter to the editor of a newspaper as a form of business correspondence. A point of view can be expressed and supporting reasons detailed. Current concerns in the junior high school or local problems are probably more within the range of seventh grade interests than are areas with national or international scope.

WRITTEN COMPOSITION SEQUENCE

	GRADE 7	GRADE 8	GRADE 9
WORDS	The student can select words in writing with varied nuances of meanings.	The student can distinguish and use in writing connotation and denotation.	The student can use various figures of speech in writing.
SENTENCES	The student reduces repetitous simple and compound sentence structures by using complex sentences in writing.	The student continues to develop the use of simple, compound, and complex sentences in writing.	The student can place phrase and clause modifiers appropriately to convey intended meaning in writing.
PARAGRAPHS	The student can write a narrative paragraph developed by chronological order or by order of importance. The student can write a descriptive paragraph, including sensory details, developed by order of location.	The student can write simple expository paragraphs of process, explanation, and opinion.	The student can write expository paragraphs which include comparison and contrast. The student can write a multi-paragraph paper with clear transitions between paragraphs.

COMPOSITION: GRADE 8

INTRODUCTION

Showing more variation in their attitude and achievement than other junior high students, eighth graders experience significant physical and emotional change which makes them volatile in their attitudes and inconsistent in their achievements. Parental expectation as well as their need for social acceptance and personal independence exert considerable pressure, so that eighth graders expend much interest in hiding their fears and searching for their individual identity. Because this anxiety causes some to challenge authority and assume rebellious attitudes, they need praise, specific directions, and frequent reinforcement of skills previously taught, in order to help them achieve their full potential. On the whole, this is a year of great difficulty and surprising growth.

WORDS

OBJECTIVE:

The student can distinguish and use in writing connotation and denotation.

EXPLANATION:

Students entering grade 8 have had experience working with nuances of word meanings. In the seventh grade, their concern was selecting the most accurate noun, the most precise verb, and the most appropriate adjective or adverb to convey the intended meaning. The search for the "right" word uses the thesaurus as the principal tool.

At grade 8, the thesaurus continues to be used as a valuable aid, but now students will be concerned with the emotional reactions readers have to the different words a writer might choose. While some words may have the same dictionary definition (denotation), they may differ in the way they influence the reader's reactions because of the suggested meanings implied (connotation).

ACTIVITIES:

Brainstorm with a class to make a list of places people live (hut, mansion, lean-to, cottage, condominium, shack, camp, etc.) Ask students to differentiate between those which seem desirable living places and those which do not. Then ask them to find dictionary definitions for the words. Students should come to the conclusion that although the words had similar definitions, they suggested different qualities.

Ask students to develop lists of pairs of words having positive and negative connotations (antique-old, modern-new-fangled). Have students write two paragraphs describing one incident from two disparate points of view. An example might be two descriptions of a teenage party, one by a participant, and the other by an irate neighbor. In the assignments students should make use of words with similar denotations but different connotations.

SENTENCES

OBJECTIVE:

The student continues to develop use of simple, compound, and complex sentences in writing.

EXPLANATION:

Students in grades 6 and 7 have worked at combining simple into compound and complex sentences. The eighth grade reinforces these skills by emphasizing, in compound sentences, the selection of the connective most appropriate to the meaning desired and the connection of closely related ideas.

Methods for writing the complex sentence are also reviewed, and the idea of subordination is reinforced. Special note should be made stressing that while both parts of a complex sentence might have begun as simple sentences, the subordinated idea is no longer a sentence in its own right. The subordination has changed the sentence to which it is attached, so that it depends upon the main idea. While "It is raining," is a statement, "Since it is raining,..," requires further information. It should be emphasized that dependent clauses, although they contain subjects and verbs, cannot stand alone; they are fragments.

Further reinforcement of the writing of compound and complex sentences should include the creation of more sophisticated sentences and the development of paragraphs which include the simple as well as the compound and complex sentence. Since they now have the maturity to use several kinds of sentence constructions, students should be encouraged to develop sentence variety in their writing.

PARAGRAPHS

OBJECTIVE:

The student can write simple expository paragraphs of process, explanation, and opinion.

EXPLANATION:

Students have had experience in developing descriptive and narrative paragraphs by chronological order, order of importance, and order of location. Eighth graders will learn that an expository paragraph is developed for a specific purpose. Now they will develop, with more sophistication, expository paragraphs to describe a process, to explain, and to support an opinion. In these paragraphs, a point of view is presented in which the writer is a participant in the event rather than

an observer. Furthermore, the previously acquired skills of writing narration and description may be used in developing the paragraph.

ACTIVITY:

Ask students to make a list of the steps they use to open their school lockers. Generate a discussion about the order and accuracy of the details. Next, ask the students to write a topic sentence that encompasses the details. Then, have the students develop a paragraph using these details in logical order. The use of techniques of sentence variety and word choice previously learned should be emphasized.

In working with expository paragraph, the teacher should stress the use of topic sentences, relevant details in order, and concluding statements. A mnemonic device, such as TIDE or TRIC may be used.

T - topic sentence
I - further identification of subject or person
D - supporting or explanatory detail
E - appropriate ending.

OR

T - topic sentence
R - restrictive sentence
I - illustration sentence
C - concluding sentence

WRITTEN COMPOSITION SEQUENCE

	GRADE 8	GRADE 9	GRADE 10
WORDS	The student can distinguish and use in writing connotation and denotation.	The student can use various figures of speech in writing.	The student can use concise language and avoid wordiness. The student can avoid trite, hackneyed expressions, especially cliches.
SENTENCES	The student continues to develop the use of simple, compound, and complex sentences in writing.	The student can place phrase and clause modifiers appropriately to convey intended meaning in writing.	The student can write varied sentences, providing proper coordination and subordination, including parallel structure.
PARAGRAPHS	The student can write simple expository paragraphs of process, explanation, and opinion.	The student can write expository paragraphs which include comparison and contrast. The student can write a multi-paragraph paper with clear transitions between paragraphs.	The student can develop in writing a thesis statement in simple form. The student can develop a multi-paragraph paper with an introduction, body, and conclusion.

COMPOSITION: GRADE 9

INTRODUCTION

Ninth graders, struggling toward maturity as young adults, have a strong desire both to please and to be independent, seeking approval for their behavior as well as defying established rules. Realizing more fully the importance of academic grades, they try harder to achieve at a higher level of performance than they have in the past. Since they have a longer span of attention, they ask more penetrating questions and are capable of completing longer and more challenging assignments both in and outside the classroom. Nevertheless, social pressures continue to distract ninth graders from their responsibilities and create conflicts within themselves as to the directions they will pursue.

WORDS

OBJECTIVE:

The student can use various figures of speech in writing.

EXPLANATION:

Students entering the ninth grade can add vividness and color to their writing by using figures of speech, including similes, metaphors, and personifications. In addition to achieving conciseness by suggesting more in fewer words, figures of speech provide, through imagery, a special effect. Describing thunder as "growling behind the hills" conjures the image of an animal lurking in anticipation of his prey. Saying, "John is brave," suggests that he is courageous. However, saying, "John is a tiger," says much more by comparing him with a tiger, suggesting qualities of strength, ferocity, and deception.

SENTENCES

OBJECTIVE:

The student can place phrase and clause modifiers appropriately to convey intended meaning in writing.

EXPLANATION:

The ninth grade student has had experience using simple, compound, and complex sentences. He will now focus his attention on proper placement of phrase and clause modifiers to convey his ideas clearly. Proper placement means that modifiers should be placed as near as possible to the words they modify. The sentence, "Inside the oven Mary noticed that the turkey was burning," could mean that Mary rather than the turkey was in the oven. More properly written, it could read, "Mary noticed that the turkey in the oven was burning." Likewise, a misplaced clause modifier would create the same problem. The sentence, "A large dog was trotting behind the boy that was growling," means the boy, not the dog, was growling. Placing the clause "that was growling" after the word "dog" conveys the intended meaning.

PARAGRAPHS

OBJECTIVES:

The students can write expository paragraphs which include comparison and contrast.

The student can write a multi-paragraph paper with clear transitions between paragraphs.

EXPLANATION:

Two methods of arranging details in a paragraph are comparison and contrast. A paragraph of comparison is developed by emphasizing similarities; a paragraph of contrast, by emphasizing differences. The idea of comparison and contrast is not totally new to students. The informal instinctive use of comparison and contrast is familiar even to young children. Ninth graders, however, will now learn a more systematic means of developing paragraphs through comparison and contrast.

Initially, it should be emphasized that comparison and contrast are effective only when some common ground is recognized between the two things being compared or contrasted. What this means is that what is compared or contrasted usually involves two or more items within a particular area of interest. A zoologist, for example, may compare or contrast a lizard with a garter snake; an aeronautical engineer may compare or contrast a hawk with an airplane. It is unlikely, however, that much profit would result by putting an airplane and a garter snake together, even for contrast.

One method of developing a paragraph of comparison or contrast is to present all the details about one of the items being compared followed by all the details of the other. Another method is to blend the items compared or contrasted throughout the paragraph.

ACTIVITY:

Have students read the following paragraphs.

> The heads of mother and son showed little physical resemblance. Mrs. Wolfe had a delicate-boned face and fair, thin skin which was as delicate as ivory. Her nose was small with a strong, but not prominent bridge, and was rounded at the end. Her small cheekbones just broke the flatness of her wide, round face. Tom's olive-complexioned face was large and unusually pale; his brow was massive, his nose long but not well formed, for it too had a smaller bridge than one would have expected. His black hair was always unruly, and he seldom took time to get it cut. His large brown eyes dominated all his other features, and often in moments of deep thought he would close them, almost as if to cut off the outside world, and to hide what he was undergoing.

> The heads of mother and son showed little physical resemblance. Mrs. Wolfe's skin was a delicate ivory, while Tom's complexion was olive. She had a small nose and Tom had a long nose. Her face was delicate and flat; Tom's was large and he had a massive brow. . .

Ask students which of the two methods of paragraph development is used in each paragraph. Then have them write a paragraph of comparison and contrast following one of these two approaches. You might suggest that students write on one of the following topics: you and your brother (sister), youth and old age, watching television and reading a book.

By ninth grade, most students are ready to deal with the multi-paragraph paper with special emphasis on making clear transitions between paragraphs. Students learned in eighth grade that linking words and connectives keep the thought flowing from one sentence to another. Now they will focus attention on the transitional words that keep the thought flowing from paragraph to paragraph. One approach is to use transitional words and phrases with which they are already familiar. Some of these include consequently, hence, accordingly, on the contrary, in the same way.

ACTIVITY:

To illustrate the importance of the appropriate transitions for coherence, have the students read the following sentences and put them together into a paragraph.

1. To bathe a snapping turtle properly, you should follow several steps with great care.

2. Snapping turtles just don't like soapy baths.

3. Before you begin, you should make sure that the snapping turtle is totally unaware of your plan.

4. Snapping turtles are usually found near murky rivers.

5. First prepare a bath of warm sudsy water.

6. Then lower the turtle by placing a bit of raw hamburger in a tube sock held open with a bracelet or a slinky.

7. When the snapper has poked its head far enough into the sock, quickly tie the sock around the creature's head tightly enough to prevent the pet from clipping off your finger but loosely enough to let it breathe.

8. Now immerse the fortressed reptile into the warm bath, sponge its rocky back and rinse it completely.

9. For the turtle, this experience cannot end soon enough.

10. Both you and the snapper will delight, however, in the last step, turtle waxing the lovely pet.

The point here is that by putting these sentences together in the appropriate form, in sequence, an excellent discussion can ensue about the connectives and coherence within and among paragraphs. This could be followed by isolating the sentences of a student's composition and having the class discuss how the sentences should be combined into a paragraph.

WRITTEN COMPOSITION SEQUENCE

	GRADE 9	GRADE 10	GRADE 11
WORDS	The student can use various figures of speech in writing.	The student can use concise language and avoid wordiness. The student can avoid trite, hackneyed expressions, especially cliches.	The student can use appropriate and sophisticated word choices in writing.
SENTENCES	The student can place phrase and clause modifiers appropriately to convey intended meaning in writing.	The student can write varied sentences, providing proper coordination and subordination, including parallel structure.	The student continues to develop the writing of longer and more varied sentences.
PARAGRAPHS	The student can write expository paragraphs which include comparison and contrast. The student can write a multi-paragraph paper with clear transitions between paragraphs.	The student can develop in writing a thesis statement in simple form. The student can develop a multi-paragraph paper with an introduction, body, and conclusion.	The student can develop a more complex thesis statement which requires several paragraphs to establish. The student can write multi-paragraph papers of narration, description, and argumentation, including comparison, contrast, and cause and effect.

COMPOSITION: GRADE 10

INTRODUCTION

Sophomores are ready to write longer papers--to move from single, substantial paragraphs into multi-paragraph essays. These fifteen year olds are ready to control more complex material, to expect of themselves more depth of treatment, and to provide more convincing illustrations.

WORDS

OBJECTIVES:

The student can use concise language and avoid wordiness.

The student can avoid trite, hackneyed expressions, especially cliches.

EXPLANATION:

Students entering grade 10 have been encouraged from intermediate through junior high school grades to use language concisely. However, wordiness continues to be a weakness throughout the grades; in fact, on the tenth grade level, it emerges as a serious problem as written assignments expand from longer paragraphs to multi-paragraph essays. Many students pad sentences with nonworking words and repeat the same idea in different words in an effort to achieve substance. Thus, students in grade 10 are encouraged to weigh the effect of each word, to avoid wordiness, to develop an economical style. The following example illustrates how words can be omitted so that the intended meaning is more clearly conveyed: Poor--"After descending down to the edge of the river, we boarded a small raft which was floating there on the surface of the water." Better--"After descending to the edge of the river, we boarded a small raft."

Respect for original, fresh words is also emphasized as students are guided away from trite, hackneyed expressions, especially clichés. For example, students should see the lack of freshness in the following example: "Busy as a bee in her ripe old age, grandmother always pointed with pride to the beautiful garden she had made by the sweat of her brow."

ACTIVITY:

Have small groups of students compile lists of clichés gathered from texts, parents, teachers, friends. Have each group draw or find a cartoon that illustrates the worn-out expression.

SENTENCES

OBJECTIVE:

The student can write varied sentences providing proper coordination and subordination, including parallel structure.

EXPLANATION:

In addition to being concerned with the well-chosen word, sophomores continue to compose strong, varied sentences. Tenth graders give special attention to correct, varied, and stylish coordination: joining ideas that are of equal importance; employing similar grammatical structures; selecting the appropriate connector--coordinate conjunction or conjunctive adverb--and avoiding the overly used "and."

Sophomores also give sustained attention to parallelism, adding to their mastery of simple coordination the use of correlative coordinate conjunctions. Written exercises, chalkboard experimentation, and use of the overhead projector are especially helpful in solving problems of parallelism like the ones illustrated in the following sentence: "To gain entrance they both tried persuasion and to force their way in."

Sophomores continue to concentrate upon the subordination of ideas that are less important than the ones reserved for independent clauses. Tenth graders explore the numerous means of reducing less important clauses to phrases and phrases to words in an effort to highlight and subdue their ideas.

ACTIVITY:

Write the following three sentences on the chalkboard:

1. The Governor was a native of Ohio, and she was elected for a third term.

2. The Governor, a native of Ohio, was elected for a third term.

3. The Governor who was elected for a third term is a native of Ohio.

With the class discuss the differences in structure and meaning of the three sentences. Select and discuss sample sentences containing both effective and faulty subordination from student writing.

PARAGRAPHS

OBJECTIVES:

The student can develop in writing a thesis statement in simple form.

The student can develop a multi-paragraph paper with an introduction, body, and conclusion.

EXPLANATION:

In addition to designing the sharply focused topic sentence of the paragraph, sophomores expend much effort writing the effective thesis statement, the idea that unites all paragraphs of a multi-paragraph essay. The wording of this statement is of crucial importance to the success of the paper, for a clear articulation of the central idea gives the student

a clear sense of direction. If the student has one central idea, if he limits his span of time and place, and, above all, if he has a key word that expresses his highly focussed attitude toward his material, he should have a good thesis statement.

ACTIVITY:

On the chalkboard write the following thesis statements and have the students discuss why papers based upon these thesis statements would be difficult, if not impossible, to write.

1. Baretta is an interesting TV show. (interesting--too general, bland)
2. Nixon was a poor President. (poor--too undefined, much too broad)
3. There is too much violence on TV, and this violence has come under very heavy attack in the past year. (two-pronged, too much to do)
4. The Olympics are exciting to watch, but they shouldn't be held in Moscow. (two-pronged, too general)
5. The U.S. has essentially five military organizations: the Army, Navy, Marine Corp, Air Force, and Coast Guard. (self-evident)
6. The Rams are always the best football team. (impossible to "prove")
7. Light travels at approximately 186,000 miles per second. (dead-end, factual, no attitude)
8. Marlowe's, Webster's, and Shakespeare's works have much in common. (too vast, general, unfocused)

Now write the following thesis statements on the chalkboard and have the students discuss why these statements make writing easy.

1. Franklin D. Roosevelt initiated several badly needed economic reforms in 1937.

2. In the past two years irrefutable evidence has been published by American tobacco companies themselves that smoking is dangerous.

3. There are three key reasons why Brutus, central character in William Shakespeare's historical tragedy, Julius Caesar, joined the conspiracy against his former friend.

4. The really different street people on Baretta with their strange clothing, unique speech habits, and individual points of view make the show very colorful.

Tenth graders examine various types of introductory paragraphs, paragraphs which effectively introduce the main concern of the body. Some introductions may start with a quotation, others with statistics, and others with narration of a relevant incident--there are numerous attractive possibilities. If the student plans to discuss a literary work, it is important that the title of the work, the author, the period, and the genre be woven into the introduction. It is also important that the writer does not start with, "In this paper I shall ...," or "In this paper I shall attempt to ..." Rather, the writer should design a relevant-to-the-body introduction that demands the reader's full attention.

ACTIVITY:

After students have read the following introductory paragraph, discuss how examples can be used in an introduction, as well as how specificity contributes to good opening paragraphs. Students should then write their own introductions based on the discussion.

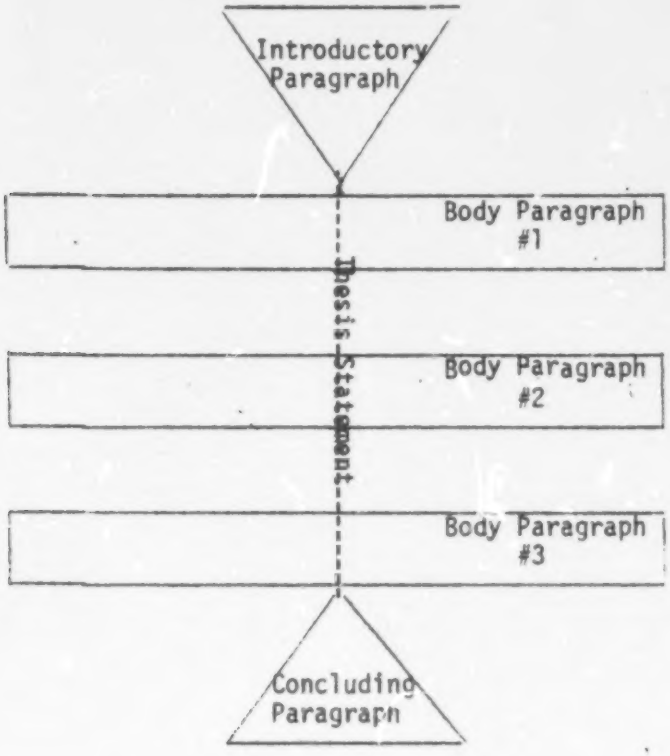
> For many years automatic vending machines have dispensed such products as salted peanuts, chewing gum, cigarettes, soft drinks, and candy bars. Now these robot salesmen are becoming more versatile. At one Eastern airport, the simple act of inserting a coin in the appropriate slot will get you a magazine, a ballpoint pen, a toothbrush, a pocket comb, a handkerchief, a necktie, a suit of underwear, a cup of hot coffee or chicken soup, a set of puzzle toys, a spray of French perfume, an insurance policy, or a shoe shine. There are other machines that will take your blood pressure or give you a thirty-second sniff of pure oxygen. One corporation has designed an automatic snack bar--a cluster of vending machines that offer toasted sandwiches, hot soup, chili, baked beans, pastry, fruit juice, milk, and coffee. Another firm has even produced an automatic cafeteria with a menu of over fifty dishes, including a roast-turkey dinner; the only thing lacking is a machine which will accept a tip from the diner and then flash a "thank you" sign. In the past five years such versatile machines as these have changed the buying habits of the nation in several crucial ways.

The introduction should lead into a three-to-six page body that thoroughly develops the thesis statement. Using various designs of comparison, contrast, analysis, or cause and effect, sophomores should offer a generous supply of details, illustrations, narratives, and descriptions that persuade the reader.

It is important to stress that the same principles that govern the development of the paragraph apply to the development of the essay. Whereas students have concentrated in the past on developing the topic statements and writing clincher sentences within a single paragraph, now sophomores move to a controlling thesis statement and a total design that knit together successive paragraphs. The interdependent parts of the paper can be seen in the following diagram.

TITLE _____

Thesis Statement: _____



ACTIVITY:

Have students draw a similar model for a paper they are in the process of writing.

Sophomores also concentrate upon writing strong conclusions, ones that do not say, "In conclusion..." or "To sum up..." Instead of just stopping, they strive to bring their essays to an end that is not mechanical, irrelevant, coy, weak, or pompous. They do not rely on

a single sentence such as, "I guess someday the problem will be solved," or "What would you do?" Rather, students write a good concluding paragraph that makes the theme seem complete. The reader feels he has been transported to his final destination, not abandoned in mid-journey.

By reemphasizing a main idea or ideas, presenting a final striking example or analogy, asking a parting question, forecasting the future of the problem at hand, inciting a call to action, or using any of the other numerous possibilities, sophomores concentrate on writing a conclusion that is related to what has preceded it in the body. These paragraphs must be clearly organized, employing the best design to effect a decisive ending.

ACTIVITY:

Have students write a good concluding paragraph after they have read the following model and discussed the various requirements and types of concluding paragraphs.

> Such current changes are only the beginning. In all probability, vending machines are destined to play an increasingly important role in retail merchandising. Today these devices sell nearly $2,500,000,000 worth of products annually; in five years such sales may climb to $4,000,000,000 annually. For with the exception of a few items like automobiles, grand pianos, individually tailored suits, and boxer puppies, there are comparatively few consumer products which cannot--at least in theory--be sold by machine. Indeed, some vending-machine manufacturers are now dreaming of a cluster of machines that will dispense a complete line of merchandise, forming an automatic supermarket or variety store. When that day arrives, the phrase "Deposit Money Here" may be the key slogan of American commerce. It would seem that the potential usefulness of vending machines is likely to be limited only by the ingenuity of their inventors.

WRITTEN COMPOSITION SEQUENCE

	GRADE 10	GRADE 11	GRADE 12
WORDS	The student can use concise language and avoid wordiness. The student can avoid trite, hackneyed expressions, especially cliches.	The student can use appropriate and sophisticated word choices in writing.	The student has a more sensitive use of language in developing an individual style.
SENTENCES	The student can write varied sentences, providing proper coordination and subordination, including parallel structure.	The student continues to develop the writing of longer and more varied sentences.	The student varies sentences for style: loose, balanced, and periodic.
PARAGRAPHS	The student can develop in writing a thesis statement in simple form. The student can develop a multi-paragraph paper with an introduction, body, and conclusion.	The student can develop a more complex thesis statement which requires several paragraphs to establish. The student can write multi-paragraph papers of narration, description, and argumentation, including comparison, contrast, and cause and effect.	The student can write a multi-paragraph paper of definition and of inductive and deductive reasoning.

COMPOSITION: GRADE 11

INTRODUCTION

The student in grade 11 is rapidly approaching adulthood. It is at this time that the mind begins channeling its thoughts in the direction of which college to select after high school or which job market to enter. It is crucial for the school to begin refining a student's level of academic sophistication and critical awareness. Therefore, the materials presented at this level are designed primarily to encourage fluent and perceptive thinking.

WORDS

OBJECTIVE:

The student can use appropriate and sophisticated word choice in writing.

EXPLANATION:

As writers, all students fall victim to their ears and tongues. What their ears hear repeatedly, their minds tend to absorb. Once recorded, these oral utterances (whether idiomatically correct or not) will filter into the writing process. Unless the misuses of language are corrected, the students will bear the dual stigma of being both poor speakers and poor writers. Thus, in grade 11, teachers will concentrate on improving the power of word selection, especially appropriateness and sophistication of word choice.

Since our language is often misused and abused by well-intentioned speakers, appropriate and effective word choice often becomes a problem. Faulty expressions and inexact words creep into our diction, usage, and idiomatic expressions until no one is certain what is correct and what

is not. Should students write could of or could have? Do students put on a play or perform a play? Should students put their best foot forward or should students present the most attractive side of their nature? The fact that someone knows what is meant does not always make the utterance correct. Work in appropriate word selection will help students avoid the many oral pitfalls that affect writing.

Students in grade 11 will also be taught to avoid the "error" that little Susie made in grade 4 when she told her teacher, "Miss Rose, tell Billy to stop hitting me with his pencil." Was Billy really hitting Susie? or, was he poking Susie? or, was he stabbing Susie? Because of an inability to express clearly through word choice what actually happened, Billy's action remains a partial mystery. Since the lack of a sophisticated vocabulary will always mar clear expression, students in grade 11 will work on developing a more expressive use of words.

ACTIVITY:

Put the most basic (colorless) form of a verb on the blackboard (example: hit). Next, have the class begin to make hit clearer. How hard a hit was it? What type of hit? Try going from lightest hit (nudge?) to hardest hit (pummel?). As students complete the spectrum of possibilities for a simple word like hit, they will begin to see the benefits of precise and sophisticated word choice.

SENTENCES

OBJECTIVE:

The student continues to develop the writing of longer and more varied sentences.

EXPLANATION:

After mastering the necessary skills for achieving more complicated sentence structures in grade 10 (coordination, subordination, parallel structure), students in grade 11 will concentrate on designing sophisticated compound-complex structures and utilizing sentence variety for the enhancement of style. Students will not only see how the length and type of sentence chosen can either add to or detract from the paragraph's overall effect, but also understand that the noun-verb construction is not always the best (and only) sentence structure to use.

ACTIVITY:

Give the class the following sample paragraph to analyze for sentence variety. Which sentences do they find particularly effective? Why? Have students select a composition from their folders for revision. (You might suggest to your students that they try to imitate the sentence style of the author in the sample paragraph below.)

> People are still wondering how it happened. Some suspect that the horse was used to the long years of lazing around the stable and wanted to get back to his wife and children. Others maintain that he could put up no longer with my rhetoric. Whatever the reason, it still remains that the horse turned his nose in the direction of his home, and in this direction he bolted post haste. He stopped me in mid-sentence. The world raced past me, a fantastic fairyland of greens and browns and wind and sun. I said a small prayer into the horse's left ear (which was not as difficult as it sounds for I was sitting on his neck at this time) and the beast must have been a thoughtful old darling because he stopped, short. I did not.

PARAGRAPHS

OBJECTIVES:

The student can develop a more complex thesis statement which requires several paragraphs to establish.

The student can write multi-paragraph papers of narration, description, and argumentation, including comparison, contrast, and cause and effect.

EXPLANATION:

Students in grade 10 had considerable experience in writing multi-paragraph papers (generally four or five paragraphs) with a single, usually simple, thesis. From this simple thesis, students worked on developing and refining the three basic essay components--introduction, body, and conclusion. The use of examples was the principal mode of development in these essays.

In grade 11 the importance of the thesis statement as an essay's unifying element will be emphasized. Furthermore, the students will work on constructing sophisticated thesis statements rather than simple ones. The benefits of sophistication are twofold. First, a complex thesis statement creates a sharper focus for the essay. Second, with a sharp focus a student can demonstrate a deeper insight into and a breadth of knowledge about a subject that a simple thesis does not allow. For example, the simple thesis statement, "Huck Finn revolted against society's many conventions," is quite basic in design. The method of proof is obvious (examples), and the question itself entails minimal interpretation. A more complex approach to this question is contained in the thesis, "Huck Finn's need to rebel against society's conventions stemmed from the dualistic world that Twain portrayed, a world of the sham and the true, of kindness and cruelty, and of good and evil." In the second thesis, the

controlling idea is more specific, and it forces the writer to utilize more complex methods of proof and demonstrates a greater grasp of the material. The ultimate result of the complex thesis statement, then, is a more disciplined and insightful paper.

In addition to working on the thesis statement, students in grade 11 will be assigned papers that follow a specific rhetorical mode, such as, comparison, or contrast, or cause and effect, or narration and description. Prior to grade 11, students have been involved with the process of writing. In the elementary grades, personal feeling and ideas were expanded into simple sentences with modifiers. In the junior high, the development and refinement of content was stressed. Sentences were developed into a unified paragraph through the use of coherence and transitional devices. Work in the high school, on the other hand, concentrates more on how approach to subject and style affect content. By studying the various rhetorical modes, students will learn to use the particular mode that best establishes itself as a unifying approach to the question.

For many high school students, a common problem in essay-writing is incomplete response to the question. Although, the lack of a full response can be traced to many sources, one of the problem areas is an inability to handle effectively the various rhetorical modes called for in the essay. Frequently, students become comfortable in approaching all essay questions in the same rhetorical mode, and the results are often disasterous. For example, in an essay comparing and contrasting Huck Finn's views of society to those of Holden Caulfield's, students will often supply a ratio of

90 percent contrast and 10 percent comparison. Obviously, such a ratio of information is unacceptable for a balanced essay. Although it may be easier to find differences in viewpoint than it is to see similarities in viewpoint, the question remains incomplete if both rhetorical modes have not been explored completely. Thus, students in grade 11 will profit greatly from the study devoted to the implementation of various modes of development in writing.

ACTIVITY:

Give the class the following data about the superheroes, Batman and Superman. Have the students design a thesis statement by organizing the material into one unifying rhetorical mode before writing their essays. You may (if you wish) allow students to include characteristics not included here. Check to see which rhetorical modes were selected. How many students chose simple comparison? Contrast? Comparison/contrast? Other? What guided their mode selection? Assuming that no one in the class attempted a paper of definition, show how that rhetorical mode could be adopted under the thesis question, "What qualities must a true superhero possess?"

Batman	Superman
Bat Cave	pseudonym, Clark Kent
male	came from planet Krypton
has a uniform	immortal
multi-millionaire	male
Bat Belt	newspaper reporter
other gimmicks	wears a cape
entrepreneur	x-ray vision
double identity	double identity
pseudonym, Bruce Wayne	bachelor
changes clothes in Bat Cave	goes through time dimensions
mortal	wears a uniform
comes from Earth	changes clothes in phone booth
protector of mankind	protector of mankind
black hair	works for Daily Planet newspaper
lives in present time	flies
wears a cape	black hair
bachelor	has no sidekick
has a sidekick, Robin	bulletproof body
works with police	strength superior to mortals
highly intelligent	highly intelligent

WRITTEN COMPOSITION SEQUENCE

	GRADE 10	GRADE 11	GRADE 12
WORDS	The student can use concise language and avoid wordiness. The student can avoid trite, hackneyed expressions, especially cliches.	The student can use appropriate and sophisticated word choices in writing.	The student has a more sensitive use of language in developing an individual style.
SENTENCES	The student can write varied sentences, providing proper coordination and subordination, including parallel structure.	The student continues to develop the writing of longer and more varied sentences.	The student varies sentences for style: loose, balanced, and periodic.
PARAGRAPHS	The student can develop in writing a thesis statement in simple form. The student can develop a multi-paragraph paper with an introduction, body, and conclusion.	The student can develop a more complex thesis statement which requires several paragraphs to establish. The student can write multi-paragraph papers of narration, description, and argumentation, including comparison, contrast, and cause and effect.	The student can write a multi-paragraph paper of definition and of inductive and deductive reasoning.

COMPOSITION: GRADE 12

INTRODUCTION

For some students grade 12 marks the conclusion of their formal schooling. While many of them will continue their education, the high school must consider the twelfth grade as an ending, the last opportunity it has to affect student writing. Pupils entering their senior year have had eleven years of absorbing, pondering, responding, revising. They have written extensively, contending with ideas, words, sentences, paragraphs, and themes. But, perhaps not needless to say, each student's degree of accomplishment has been influenced not only by classroom instruction but also by his/her eleven years of verbal ability, personal motivation, and hard work. Even if they have already been accepted for college or employment, seniors need to polish their skills in expository writing. They need extensive and varied opportunities to improve weak areas and to communicate their ever-maturing and more discriminating convictions.

WORDS

OBJECTIVE:

The student has a more sensitive use of language in developing an individual style.

EXPLANATION:

For eleven years the students have spent considerable time in building a stronger facility with their language. Their early years were devoted to increasing their vocabulary by finding more and better words to replace general ones. Their middle years showed them the nuances of language, that

words had both literal (denotative) and implied (connotative) meanings. By the ninth grade, students were ready to see how, by skillfully combining words, creative pictures (figurative language) could be used to communicate ideas. Finally, the high school years have been an attempt at extending and refining the skills previously learned to make students more sensitive to their use of language and to develop an individual style. Students were shown how perfectly good words could be rendered totally ineffective because of excessive use, and they were also taught to find the best word, the word that conveyed the fullest sense of what was intended. Thus, when Johnny devoured the two sandwiches put before him, the students knew not only that Johnny ate his sandwiches but also that he ate them both quickly and hungrily. In other words, students have come to appreciate words more fully.

Through this entire process of language development, students have become increasingly aware of their individual writing sense or style. Ultimately, by being more conscious of how words should be shaped and utilized for effect, students will begin to insert their own individuality, voice, and coloring into their writing.

SENTENCES

OBJECTIVE:

The student varies sentences for style: loose, balanced, and periodic.

EXPLANATION:

Students entering the twelfth grade have had continuous experience with composing the sentence. They have experimented with diverse patterns

of structure, purpose, length, and beginnings. Now seniors concentrate upon incorporating into their writing even more consciously styled sentences. Most students will continue to write primarily loose sentences, sentences that make a complete statement and then add further details of explanation or illustration. These sentences present the main idea immediately. For example, "I like to fly, wheeling around in the air free as a bird," or, "I went because everyone else did." However, when they consciously experiment with loose sentences, students will more intentionally--and hopefully artistically--style the sentence.

Seniors will also experiment with the less frequently used periodic sentence, a sentence so constructed that its thought is not completed or its effect achieved until the very end. For example, "Throughout the afternoon, while the waves came crushing onto the shore and the gulls flew screaming overhead, no one dared to move." Such a sentence will create suspense or build to a climax or highlight an idea by withholding the main thought.

Finally, seniors will write balanced sentences with parallel structures and rhythms. For example, "The Republicans wanted heavy tariffs to protect industry; the Democrats wanted free trade to lower prices." Such sentences--sometimes ornate, emphatic, formal--can, nevertheless, be effective for antithetical ideas. By experimenting with these sentences, seniors will become more aware of rhythm, effect, and style and will incorporate this study into better writing.

ACTIVITY:

After a small group has presented examples of effectively styled, loose, periodic, and balanced sentences gleaned from Bartlett's Book of Familiar Quotations, all students will experiment with writing variously styled sentences, considering the various mood, tone, or effect produced.

PARAGRAPHS

OBJECTIVE:

The student can write multi-paragraph papers of definition and of inductive and deductive reasoning.

EXPLANATION:

A common human trait is "taking too much for granted." Frequently, we assume people know what we mean or where our thoughts are coming from when we speak or write. Unfortunately, such assumptions are often unfounded, leaving the intended audience in a state of confusion because the terms are not clear. To avoid this problem, students in grade 12 will be asked to create multi-paragraph papers in which extended definitions play a central role in focusing the content of the paper.

The use of definition as a mode of development is helpful when the writer wishes to explain unfamiliar terms or to give new meanings to familiar ones or to indicate the precise sense in which a word is to be understood. To define is to limit and to exclude--to narrow those characteristics or properties that set the subject apart from other objects. However, defining as a method of developing an idea goes beyond being merely useful as an aid to clarity; defining can also be used to establish the intention of the writer, giving the paper a clearer purpose. For example, in the book Love Story, the simple definition of love as

"Love means never having to say you're sorry," establishes the type of love-based relationship that the author portrays as ideal.

Naturally, the method of development and the elements that will be central to any particular definition depend, to a great extent, on what is being defined. If the word is a basic one (car), it might be helpful to trace its origins back to its Latin root (carrus) to see how the word has developed through the centuries. However, a more fundamental use of definition as a clarifier is utilized with words where connotation is more essential than denotation. For example, words like love, school, and freedom are difficult to define in a denotative sense; they mean connotatively various things to different people. It is the task of the writer to make meaning clear to the audience. If utilized properly, the technique of extended definition will supply this needed clarification.

ACTIVITY:

Below is a sample of extended definition. Students should read it carefully to see how the author defines his topic.

Words, like trees, bend with the prevailing winds. In the climate of opinion of the past few years, the word dissent has undergone a decided transformation. For most of U.S. history, it clearly meant speech--the unorthodox opinion, the challenging idea. Then, during the 1960's, civil rights protestors took to the streets to fight segregation, and the word became associated with demonstrations as much as with speech. As protests have continued to broaden and increase, dissent has come to be used to describe and defend a wide variety of physical acts, including violence toward property and even toward people.

Now, using any of the sentences below, have students construct their own paragraph where extended definition is the unifying focus.

Life is just a bowl of cherries.
School is a prison.
A liberal is a man with both feet planted firmly in mid-air.
Love is ...
Friendship is ...
America is ...
English is a bore.

In addition to writing papers of definition, about 25 percent of the students in grade 12 will not only organize their ideas both inductively and deductively but also learn to avoid the pitfalls of these methods. To organize ideas inductively, students begin with evidence--facts, statistics, instances--and after studying this evidence, they arrive at a conclusion or a generalization. For example, consider the case of the angry motorist who wrote the following letter to a local newspaper:

> About midnight Saturday I was going through the intersection of Haven Boulevard and Elm Street on a green light when my car was rammed into a right angle by a car which had obviously passed through the red light. The driver of this car was seventeen years old. He had six other teenagers in the car with him, one of whom was badly injured in the collision. A month ago I was forced off the highway by a car driven by a high school student who insisted on passing even though there was not enough room to pass. To avoid a sideswipe, I drove into the ditch. These experiences have convinced me that teenage drivers are a menace and that the driving age should be raised to twenty-one.

How many students would agree with this man's conclusion? Has he made any serious errors in inductive thinking? What, then, is needed for effective inductive conclusions?

ACTIVITY:

Show the class a large picture of a landscape or some other vivid scene. Have each student think of a particular mood

or feeling which the picture suggests, such as: calmness, sorrow, joy. After the students have selected their words, tell them to list all of the details which led them to their selected feelings. Next, instruct them to arrange their details in an effective order for the purpose of developing a paragraph. Have the students discuss how they inductively reached a general conclusion from a wealth of specific detail.

Seniors also use deductive reasoning to organize their writing. They start with a generalization--a topic sentence in a paragraph or a thesis statement in an essay--that is assumed to be true and then present logical steps or evidence to lead the readers to a conclusion.

For example:

All Communists read Marx.
James reads Marx.
Therefore, James is a Communist.

All jocks are dumb.
Bill is a jock.
Therefore, Bill is dumb.

If the first and second statements are true, then the conclusion is valid or logical, but if either one is not true the conclusion, although logical, will not be true. Obviously, students using deductive methods in their writing must examine their initial statement, as well as their succeeding statements, very carefully so that the reader will reach both a logical and truthful conclusion.

ACTIVITY:

Write on the chalkboard the following statement:

An athlete is a good sportsman.

Then have the students write qualities they might expect the person to have, such as:

He accepts a ruling even when it is against him.
He does not cheat but always abides by the rules.
He learns to give and take.
He appreciates the efforts of others.

Discuss these qualities with the students in light of their personal experiences and observations. Lead them to understand that if a generalization is true, the specific details must develop directly from the general statement. Then have the students write a paragraph using a sound first statement supported by logically deduced details.